

Annual Report of the Congregation 2023



St Thomas
Lutheran Church

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**ST THOMAS LUTHERAN CHURCH
GROSSE ILE, MICHIGAN 2023**

OFFICERS

PRESIDENT	Art Wahl
VICE PRESIDENT	Sandi Loso
SECRETARY	Nancy Graver
TREASURER	Kent Kujala
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	Timothy Perry

CHURCH COUNCIL

SPECIAL ELECTION OF COUNCIL HELD IN 2022. TERMS LISTED BELOW.

TERMS EXPIRING JANUARY 2024	TERMS EXPIRING JANUARY 2025	TERMS EXPIRING JANUARY 2026
Salvatore Finazzo	Anna Gartner	Justine Brozek
Nancy Graver	Sandi Loso	Wendy Brozek
	David Patterson	Kent Kujala
	Paula Riley	Erika Kwan
	Art Wahl	

Pastor: Kari Rinas

Adm. Assistant: Lisa Perry

Booth Tech/Social Media Manager: Betty Ruck

Custodian: Jackie Noles

Director of Youth and Family Ministry: Open

Director of Hospitality and Property: Linda Landis

Director of Worship and Music: Karen Skrocki

Music/Property Assistant: Jeff Kline

Musicians: Bob Krzeczowski, Wendy Brozek

2023 PASTOR'S REPORT

St Thomas Family,

What a wonderful year this has been for our congregation! Together we have welcomed new members, celebrated baptisms, rejoiced with our young people as they received communion, grieved those in our community who have joined the Church Triumphant, and marked 60 years of ministry in amazing ways! And that does not include all of the other ways that we came together to proclaim God's love in little and big ways this year.

St Thomas, it is such an honor to serve as your pastor. Your heart for our congregation, your love for our community, and the willingness that you show to explore where God is calling us into the future are just a few of the many ways that you make ministry and leading such a joy.

It would be impossible to say thank you to everyone who has contributed to the work of St Thomas over this past year, because truly, every one of you has given of yourselves in numerous ways. For all who volunteered and worked for our participation in the Island Fest Parade, our Peace, Love, and 60 Anniversary Festival, the Christmas Market, worship, our outreach ministries, Quilters, Bible Study, Men's and Women's Lunches, and everything in between, I am deeply, deeply grateful. You are doing wonderful work to promote our congregation and build relationships among our members and beyond.

We are also blessed with amazing staff who work hard to see that our needs are met. They all go above and beyond their job descriptions to help, to share God's love, to bring us together, and who love St Thomas. It is a gift to be able to see our staff always thinking of ways to bring our community together, coming up with creative and hospitable ideas, connecting with the wider community, meeting needs beyond our walls, and serving our congregation through administrative tasks and ensuring our financial well-being.

As we started the 2023 year, our 60th anniversary year, an idea grew from a tiny seed to host a little party of sorts, outside, and to invite our neighbors to come and celebrate with us. The small idea of a bounce house, some vendors, and a little entertainment grew. And as you came together to help finance the idea, as we hit goal after goal, that tiny mustard seed grew into an incredible tree that culminated in September with entertainment, a delicious meal provided to all, music, games, crafts, vendors, a mini-car show, and so much more than I think any of us imagined when we first started. We received an incredibly generous grant from the Dearborn Downriver Plus Fund, and that, combined with the generosity of our members allowed us to "dream big"! Our festival was a great way to connect with the community, and even now continues to be something that others points out—"St Thomas! That's the church where the big festival happened!" Or "Did you make it to their festival? It was incredible!" What a joy to celebrate!

This year also saw six of our young people complete their instruction in the Lord's Supper. We had a wonderful day together as we learned about communion, made candleholders for mealtimes, shared stories, explored our faith and painted communion cups together. Watching these six children learn about the sacrament, the gift of incredible love that God shares with us in this meal, and watching their faith grow a little more deeply filled my own spirit. With pride, we marked the completion of their instruction by celebrating their communion with the cups they had made, each of them helping to serve our congregation. Listening to their voices declare, "The blood of Christ, shed for you," as they felt comfortable, was a sweet proclamation of the ways that God uses each of us to share God's love.

In October, I started a confirmation program that looks very different from the norm. In order to help our students complete a confirmation program that fits into their already-busy schedules, I wrote a confirmation program that allows students to fulfill requirements at their own pace and choosing ways to fulfill them based on their own interests and comfort. We held one of our in-person classes in early December, and plan to hold two more sessions in the remainder of the 2023-2024 academic year, with some virtual check-ins and classroom requirements. It has been fun to work with the six students that we have in the program as they continue to explore how God is moving in their lives, and to share some of the stories of our faith. I look forward to working with these students more in the year ahead, and to see how God is working through them and nurturing their faith.

I offered Ashes-to-Go on a cold, wintery Ash Wednesday, but was warmed to see folks pull up to the little pop-up tent where I was able to offer a brief prayer, confession and forgiveness, ashes, and communion to those who desired it. We had

a few St Thomas folks come, but also several others from the Grosse Ile community who wanted to receive ashes, but could not attend worship. I intend to offer this again this year, so watch for more information with times to come!

We have seen our congregation continue to grow in energy and commitment to this faith community and to seeking God's intended future for us. As we look into the year ahead, we are turning our focus towards our Capital Campaign as we try to "Fill the Ship"! We are working towards our goal of paying down our mortgage before our interest rate changes in October, with the hope of better securing our financial position, and in doing so, our future. Achieving this goal will allow us to find greater financial stability and open more possibilities for ministry in the years to come.

We have already seen St Thomas folks share generously towards this goal, having already received \$5375 towards our goal of \$170k. We will share in more detail at our Annual Meeting the specifics of our goal, the two phases that we see (the first being towards our mortgage, with an end date of September 2024, and the second phase going towards funds for furnace repair/replacement and technology updates as needed). I am excited for the opportunities that will be presented as we approach our goal and look ahead to our next 60 years of ministry on Grosse Ile! Every contribution towards this goal will make an impact. Thank you to all who have given towards this goal already, and if you have not given to the campaign yet, we ask you to prayerfully consider doing so. All monies that come in for this campaign will go towards paying down the remaining principle on the mortgage.

In 2024, I am also anticipating making a few minor changes to our services for the season of Lent. My plan is, instead of trying to participate in the Downriver mid-week services that move from church to church, we will hold our own services here at St Thomas. Specific plans are still being worked through, but the broad-strokes vision is that during Lent, Thursday evening services will continue to be a full service, but with a different sermon or message than the sermons for Sunday. Thursday evenings will have a theme for the season of Lent, while Sundays will continue to follow the Revised Common Lectionary readings. This way, Thursday evening worshipers will continue to have a full service, but those who typically attend Sundays will have a unique service to attend during Lent as we prepare our hearts and spirits for Holy Week. We will add a simple gathering of soup and bread before each service, but will only be looking for one or two volunteers to provide something each week. I will share a little more detail during our annual meeting as I have specifics more finalized. I hope that, whether you normally worship on Thursdays or Sundays, you will make time in your week to come to at least some of these services and join in some time of nourishment and fellowship.

Additionally, I am planning for our final Thursday evening service during the season of Lent, March 21, to be a service of healing. During this service, there will be time for quiet reflection and meditation, communion, and a special time to receive individual prayer and anointing for those who wish to receive it, at the conclusion of the service. This additional prayer time will be an opportunity to pray for healing of body, mind, or spirit, and can be a powerful connection of faith and expression of need.

Other plans that we are working toward in 2024 include: Vacation Bible School (and we will need your help to make it happen!); continuing to assist with ChristNet to feed and house those who are experiencing homelessness; opportunities to nurture our faith through study and gatherings; and more! Help us share the news in our community that exciting things are happening at St Thomas, and we want others to come and see, and have God's love in Jesus Christ extended to them!

I am truly excited for the year ahead and all the ways that we will continue to share God's love in our community and the world. Entering into this year, I also leave you with a challenge: to extend an invitation to at least three people to come and see what we are up to at St Thomas. It could be an invitation to a worship service or to an event that we are planning. It might be an invitation to a neighbor with VBS-aged children to bring them when the time comes. It could be an invitation for a friend with a particular skill to help out on a project around the church. It could be an invitation to someone who is a St Thomas person that you have not seen in a while or a friend or neighbor who has never been to St Thomas - or to a church! But I challenge you to extend the invitation, to follow up on it, and to encourage them to come with you and see some of the exciting things we are doing. Invite them to see the ways that we are working to share God's love and to proclaim the Good News that Jesus Christ offers to everyone. We are doing great work together, Beloveds, and I hope you want others to know and see it, just as much as I do! Thank you for an incredible year, and for what is still to come!

In Christ,

Pastor Kari Rinas

2023 COUNCIL REPORT

Members of St. Thomas Lutheran Church,

It has been my privilege and honor to serve as Council President again in 2023. We have had such a great year of community, growth, celebration, and preparation for the years to come. We thank both Nancy Graver and Dr. Salvo Finazzo for their dedication and work on St. Thomas' behalf while serving on Council. Both Nancy and Sal have decided to end their tenure on Council as of January 2024. They both were instrumental in the work we have done since May of 2022, they both are dedicated to continue to be a part of our congregation and will continue to work for our church going forward. Church Council will have 9 people serving in 2024 (our Constitution indicated number) with elections for 5 positions next January, each to serve 3-year terms. The other 4 positions will be elected similarly in January 2027.

In September we had a 60th Anniversary Celebration that was well-attended and exceeded all expectations. The free-will donation that day raised \$600 that was donated directly to local food pantries in the Downriver area. Over this past year we welcomed several new members, had an increase in pledges for 2024 of over 25%, we had six children receive their First Communion training, we have six others that have begun their Confirmation instruction, we are streaming services live and once again had a very successful Christmas Market. Our church has established operations that are solid and will sustain us going forward. We have an engaged Mutual Ministry committee, a Stewardship Committee that is very active with investments/budget and the Capital Campaign. Although we still can use some people to help, we have ushers at services, communion assistants each week, readers each week, a full operating staff, and we continue to offer a more personal Thursday evening worship service. Church Council meets once a month on a Sunday after church service, you are welcome to attend, the agenda and minutes are available in the office.

In the coming year we have made it a goal of Council to gain more volunteers to help with all the aspects of St. Thomas' operation, including the worship areas mentioned and several other areas of need. Our Evangelism committee has four council members working on various aspects of outreach and making connections with members and our community. We continue to be supportive and instrumental in ChristNet, among other ministries. We have a Sunday School program with a curriculum and volunteer teachers. Worship and Music is looking to add a few more voices and maybe incorporate some added musicians. We can use assistance with technology, both streaming and in the technology booth. Property and Maintenance has been divided into two basic functional areas: "Interior" and "exterior", both areas need people to assist with various items and tasks. (We do have staff that cover the basics, but they need "hands" to complete many items through the year.) You are encouraged to pray and think about ways you can contribute your skills, talents, and energy this year to St. Thomas in one or more of these vital areas. Pastor Kari, or any of us on Council, would be thrilled to talk with you more about how you can be a part of this work.

With that being said, there is still a lot of work to do, and many ways we can demonstrate our Christian love in the community and among our congregation. Although the term is not often attached to churches, I feel like everyone "is a stake holder - it's your church, this is your footprint of faith in action". Prayerfully consider how God may be directing you to help.

Finally, I ask you to continue to pray for this congregation, Pastor Kari, and the work God is calling us to do in 2024.

Art Wahl
Council President
St. Thomas Lutheran Church, Grosse Ile

2023 STATISTICAL REPORT

MEMBERSHIP

Child members beginning of 2023		97
Accessions with parents	4	
Accessions by baptism	<u>1</u>	
		5
Child members confirmed	-	
Other losses	(2)	
Statistical Adjustment	<u>(87)</u>	
Total losses		<u>(89)</u> <u>(84)</u>
Child members end of 2023		13
Confirmed members beginning of 2023		382
Accessions by baptism	-	
Accessions by confirmation	-	
Other accessions	<u>7</u>	
Total accessions		7
Losses by death	(3)	
Other losses	(8)	
Statistical Adjustment	<u>(242)</u>	
Total losses		<u>(253)</u> <u>-</u>
Confirmed members end of 2023		136

MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY BY YEARS

	<u>1963</u>	<u>1973</u>	<u>1983</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>
Conf.	58	184	229	308	322	356	378	392	394	391	389	390	382	136
Children	<u>42</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>99</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>109</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>116</u>	<u>99</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>13</u>
Total	100	263	305	400	412	455	486	501	510	507	488	491	479	149

Finances through the years - total financial giving (does not include PPP Loan)

		<u>Program/Grant</u>	<u>Reg. Ben.</u>	<u>Other Benevolence</u>	<u>Good Sam</u>
1963	- \$ 7,960	\$3,600	\$1,488		
1973	- 25,480	1,800	2,813		
1983	- 68,059		6,028	142	72
1993	- 154,352		15,200	377	1,083
2008	- 213,860		20,312	2,527	1,084
2009	- 196,319		13,522	1,385	902
2011	- 227,341		15,000	2,832	1,688
2013	- 219,167	\$74,309 (Cap.)	10,000	6,507	1,816
2014	- 236,312	\$51,970 (Cap.)	12,123	4,252	1,190
2015	- 227,148	\$26,508 (Cap.)	14,004	3,050	1,116
2016	- 211,864		14,004	2,075	1,758
2017	- 204,746		7,224	2,625	1,077
2019	- 198,342	\$95,104 (Cap.)	4,996	1,650	1,010
2020	- 177,984	\$31,853 (Cap.)	2,920	2,210	162
2021	- 155,979	\$9,550 (Cap.)	2,496	881	455
2022	- 155,301	\$180 (Cap.)	2,496	1,089	313
2023	161,320	\$5,475 (Cap.)/\$4,500 (Grant)	2,496	1,136	354

Not included above: gifts given in kind, special giving such as memorial gifts, Christnet, or local outreach

WORSHIP ATTENDANCE (average)

	<u>1972</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>2008</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>Ave. Att.</u>
Jan.	78	110	107	75	117	154	116	117	84	88	0	45	47	1998-144
Feb.	81	115	98	88	127	129	121	115	94	93	29	53	51	2007-119
Mar.	94	128	107	76	116	139	134	136	83	84	39	47	55	2010-98
Apr.	102	151	109	93	150	140	130	142	103	0	61	47	73	2011-116
May	95	123	100	97	116	141	132	136	89	0	57	52	57	2013-129
Jun.	79	117	112	88	121	119	100	113	99	0	54	53	57	2016-117
Jul.	58	87	79	76	100	109	96	65	83	42	46	47	49	2017-103
Aug.	62	91	67	93	93	107	101	64	113	37	53	55	39	2019-85
Sep.	81	120	150	106	132	126	117	73	80	47	60	62	53	2020-58
Oct.	83	131	124	112	135	127	117	80	86	41	56	49	54	2021-57
Nov.	91	135	105	120	135	129	124	97	80	36	53	49	49	2022-52
Dec.	107	153	125	125	147	134	113	102	98	0	48	69	57	2023-54

2023 TREASURER'S REPORT

Year in Review – 2023

St Thomas was blessed to have received \$174,040 for ongoing ministries through the faithful and generous giving of our congregational members.

The mortgage principle was reduced by \$12,612. The remaining balance on the mortgage is \$177,736.

Submitted by: Kent Kujala

2024 PROPOSED BUDGET

	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	2024 Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
420 · Loose Offering	\$ 1,149	\$ 750	\$ 1,149
425 · Special Services	2,675	1,000	2,675
435 · Miscellaneous Income	5,785	2,800	1,749
440 · Flowers	406	175	406
445 · Interest Income	2,025	1,000	3,275
460 · Building Use	680	685	680
408 · Evangelism	195	231	195
415 · Current	161,125	164,400	164,400
Total Income	\$ 174,040	\$ 171,041	\$ 174,529
Expense			
500 · Ministry of the Pastor			
501 · Salary-Pastor	\$ 40,713	\$ 40,713	\$ 40,713
505 · Social Security - Pastor	4,415	4,415	4,415
515 · Mileage Reimbursement	2,306	2,500	600
520 · Pension,Health, Life Ins.	15,448	16,196	16,408
521 · Pastor Business Expense-Cell	1,000	1,000	1,000
545 · Continuing Ed/Pastor Expenses	364	1,250	1,250
550 · Housing Allowance	17,000	17,000	17,000
Total 500 · Ministry of the Pastor	\$ 81,246	\$ 83,074	\$ 81,386
600 · Church Buildings & Properties			
601 · Utilities - Church	\$ 10,381	\$ 11,000	\$ 10,881
605 · Phone/Internet/Web	2,899	2,536	3,450
610 · Property & Liability Ins.	4,248	4,335	4,700
625 · Repair & Maint. - Church	26,217	15,000	15,342
626 · Custodian	3,875	4,185	3,875
640 · Mortgage Interest - Church	6,737	6,983	7,862
641 · Mortgage Principal	12,559	12,313	12,559
Total 600 · Church Buildings & Properties	\$ 66,916	\$ 56,351	\$ 58,669
700 · Parish Administration			
701 · Clerical Wages & Benefits	\$ 15,600	\$ 15,600	\$ 15,600
705 · FICA Expense	2,630	2,574	2,780
710 · Postage,Printing & Stationery	3,635	2,817	4,055
715 · Financial Supplies & Bank Fees	1,841	1,648	1,691
725 · Publicity	342	562	562
730 · Misc. Expenses	1,844	1,338	1,045
743 · Sound Tech	260	350	310
744 · Hospitality Wages	5,300	5,300	5,300
Total 700 · Parish Administration	\$ 31,452	\$ 30,189	\$ 31,343
800 · Ministry of Worship			
801 · Benevolence - Synod	\$ 2,496.00	\$ 2,496.00	\$ 2,496.00
806 · Altar Supplies	224.00	194.74	201.00
815 · Subscriptions - Books	1,345.00	1,229.09	1,224.00
820 · Conferences - Seminar	200.00	150.00	300.00
825 · Fellowship	471.00	500.00	566.00
830 · Interfaith Council	-	250.00	250.00
835 · SunSchool/Nursery/ VBS	412.00	500.00	562.00
846 · Music Leadership Wages	13,479.00	12,749.00	14,679.00
848 · Fee for Substitute Pastor	2,050.00	1,500.00	2,800.00
850 · Evangelism	155.00	2,500.00	755.00
860 · Stewardship/Finance	818.00	300.00	668.00
865 · Youth Activities	124.00	-	374.00
870 · Worship & Music - Other	1,160.00	900.00	835.00
875 · Flowers Expense	597.00	350.00	597.00
Total 800 · Ministry of Worship	\$ 23,531	\$ 23,619	\$ 26,307
Total Expense	\$ 203,145	\$ 193,233	\$ 197,705
Net Income (loss)	\$ (29,105)	\$ (22,193)	\$ (23,176)

DECEMBER 2023 BALANCE SHEET

	Dec 31, 23
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	-
100 - Current	
101 - Maintenance Escrow	\$ 5,515.12
102 - Memorials	1,158.98
103 - Good Samaritan	2,003.04
104 - Aller Scholarship Fund	8,293.07
107 - Memorial Garden	10,008.30
108 - Capital Campaign Funds Mortgage	5,375.00
118 - Quilters	647.00
122 - Capital Improvements Campaign	100.00
124 - Mortgage Reserve	10,049.62
125 - Church Mission	5,585.46
126 - Edward Jones	40,733.85
140 - PSCU /Savings	1,951.04
100 - Current - Other	43,713.94
Total 100 - Current	\$ 135,134.42
Total Checking/Savings	\$ 135,134.42
Fixed Assets	
111 - Land - 9393 Church Road	\$ 31,641.73
112 - Building - 9393 Church Road	95,704.87
115 - Building Expansion #1 - 1988	302,252.16
116 - Building Expansion #2 - 2001	1,087,503.78
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 1,517,102.54
Other Assets	
109 - Endowment - Hartig	\$ 22,200.00
130 - Deposits & Prepayments	28.96
142 - Kujala Family Endowment	30,000.00
Total Other Assets	\$ 52,228.96
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 1,704,465.92
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
205 - Withheld Federal Taxes	\$ 781.04
207 - Withheld Michigan Taxes	449.62
210 - Special Maintenance Escrow	459.53
215 - Memorials & Endowments	62,967.28
216 - Memorial Garden Prepay-Smolak	400.00
218 - Quilters	647.00
220 - Good Samaritan Fund	2,003.04
225 - Aller Scholarship Fund	8,293.07
240 - Mortgage Reserve Payable	10,049.62
245 - Fund Raising/Project Payable	2,223.96
260 - Deferred Revenue	5,550.00
265 - Miscellaneous Payables	1,521.23
267 - Market Donations 2021	5,194.76
268 - Capital Funds Payable	5,475.00
269 - Market Donations 2022	627.50
270 - Alysa Offman Gift	-
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$ 106,642.65
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 106,642.65
Long Term Liabilities	
250 - Mortgage - Church	177,735.54
Total Long Term Liabilities	\$ 177,735.54
Total Liabilities	\$ 284,378.19
Equity	
3000 - Opening Bal Equity	\$ 1,022,206.01
3900 - Retained Earnings	426,986.55
Net Income	(29,104.83)
Total Equity	\$ 1,420,087.73
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$ 1,704,465.92

2023 DECEMBER PROFIT AND LOSS

	Jan - Dec 23	Budget	B/(W) Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
420 · Loose Offering	\$ 1,149.24	\$ 750.00	\$ 399.24
425 · Special Services	2,675.00	1,000.00	1,675.00
435 · Miscellaneous Income	5,784.52	2,800.00	2,984.52
440 · Flowers	406.10	175.00	231.10
445 · Interest Income	2,025.09	1,000.00	1,025.09
460 · Building Use			
463 · Other	\$ 680.00	\$ 685.00	\$ (5.00)
Total 460 · Building Use	\$ 680.00	\$ 685.00	\$ (5.00)
490 · Total Envelopes			
408 · Evangelism	\$ 195.00	\$ 230.50	\$ (35.50)
415 · Current	\$ 161,125.13	\$ 164,400.00	\$ (3,274.87)
Total 490 · Total Envelopes	\$ 161,320.13	\$ 164,630.50	\$ (3,310.37)
Total Income	\$ 174,040.08	\$ 171,040.50	\$ 2,999.58
Expense			
500 · Ministry of the Pastor			
501 · Salary-Pastor	\$ 40,713.36	\$ 40,713.30	\$ (0.06)
505 · Social Security - Pastor	4,415.04	4,415.07	0.03
515 · Mileage Reimbursement	2,305.80	2,500.00	194.20
520 · Pension,Health, Life Ins.	15,448.08	16,195.57	747.49
521 · Pastor Business Expense-Cell	1,000.00	1,000.00	-
545 · Continuing Ed/Pastor Expenses	364.02	1,250.00	885.98
550 · Housing Allowance	17,000.16	17,000.00	(0.16)
Total 500 · Ministry of the Pastor	\$ 81,246.46	\$ 83,073.94	\$ 1,827.48
600 · Church Buildings & Properties			
601 · Utilities - Church	\$ 10,381.30	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 618.70
605 · Phone/Internet/Web	2,899.31	2,535.71	(363.60)
610 · Property & Liability Ins.	4,248.00	4,334.67	86.67
625 · Repair & Maint. - Church	26,217.05	15,000.00	(11,217.05)
626 · Custodian	3,875.00	4,185.00	310.00
630 · Maint. Escrow - Church	-	-	-
640 · Mortgage Interest - Church	6,737.02	6,983.16	246.14
641 · Mortgage Principal	12,558.98	12,312.84	(246.14)
Total 600 · Church Buildings & Properties	\$ 66,916.66	\$ 56,351.38	\$ (10,565.28)
66900 · Reconciliation Discrepancies	(27.25)	-	27.25
700 · Parish Administration			
701 · Clerical Wages & Benefits	\$ 15,600.00	\$ 15,600.00	\$ -
705 · FICA Expense	2,629.98	2,574.12	(55.86)
710 · Postage,Printing & Stationery	3,634.51	2,817.27	(817.24)
715 · Financial Supplies & Bank Fees	1,841.19	1,647.93	(193.26)
720 · Repair & Maint Office Equipment	-	137.79	137.79
725 · Publicity	341.64	561.75	220.11
730 · Misc. Expenses	1,870.43	1,200.00	(670.43)
741 · Youth & Family Wages	-	-	-
743 · Sound Tech	260.00	350.00	90.00
744 · Hospitality Wages	5,300.00	5,300.00	-
Total 700 · Parish Administration	\$ 31,477.75	\$ 30,188.86	\$ (1,288.89)
800 · Ministry of Worship			
801 · Benevolence - Synod	\$ 2,496.00	\$ 2,496.00	\$ -
805 · Bulletins, Inserts, Certicates	23.46	-	(23.46)
806 · Altar Supplies	200.81	194.74	(6.07)
815 · Subscriptions - Books	1,345.14	1,229.09	(116.05)
820 · Conferences - Seminar	200.00	150.00	(50.00)
825 · Fellowship	470.81	500.00	29.19
830 · Interfaith Council	-	250.00	250.00
835 · SunSchool/Nursery/ VBS	411.91	500.00	88.09
845 · Music Supplies	-	-	-
846 · Music Leadership Wages	13,479.00	12,749.00	(730.00)
848 · Fee for Substitute Pastor	2,050.24	1,500.00	(550.24)
850 · Evangelism	155.00	2,500.00	2,345.00
855 · Soc. Min. & Outreach	-	-	-
860 · Stewardship/Finance	818.25	300.00	(518.25)
865 · Youth Activities	123.53	-	(123.53)
870 · Worship & Music - Other	1,159.78	900.00	(259.78)
875 · Flowers Expense	597.36	350.00	(247.36)
Total 800 · Ministry of Worship	\$ 23,531.29	\$ 23,618.83	\$ 87.54
Total Expense	\$ 203,144.91	\$ 193,233.01	\$ (9,911.90)
Net Income	\$ (29,104.83)	\$ (22,192.51)	\$ (6,912.32)

2023 LADIES' GROUP

The year 2023 saw the beginning of a return to activities for the women's groups that gather at St. Thomas Lutheran Church.

- The Ladies' Lunch Group continued monthly gatherings at Ramsey's Restaurant in Trenton on the second Wednesday of the month.
- A large number of St. Thomas women made keepsake Christmas tree ornaments distributed at the Christmas Eve service for 100 attendees.
- A large donation of needed items was collected and distributed to the Michigan Humane Society and Bellaire Senior Living Facility in Riverview.
- Coffee hour was continued this year after Sunday worship services. The coffee hours were hosted by various members or by our perennial hostess, **Linda Landis**.
- **Linda Landis continues to serve as Hospitality/Property Director.** We had a sizable number of special events this year beautifully organized by Linda. We had a good attendance and a huge assortment of soups at the Downriver Cluster Ash Wednesday service sponsored at St. Thomas, a magnificent Easter breakfast, annual Aller Scholarship Recognition Reception, a well-attended 60th Anniversary of St. Thomas potluck, a Pledges and Pies event during our Stewardship campaign, and an enlarged Christmas Market in December.

2023 MEN'S GROUP

The Men's Group of St. Thomas also continued its monthly lunches during 2023. The group continued meeting at Sully's BBQ every second Thursday of the month. Attendance averaged around 5 men.

2023 PROPERTY REPORT

2023 Upgrades, Enhancements and Improvements:

- The 60th Year Anniversary of St. Thomas (happily handled)
- Third Annual Christmas Market held successfully
- New furnace in sacristy
- Lowered air-duct channel and installed new sump-pump
- Installed new security cameras
- All new LED light bulbs in sanctuary
- Replaced timer for outside lights
- New filters in educational wing registers
- Repair of sanctuary furnace
- Kick-plate installed in new coffee bar
- Gutters cleaned
- Trimming of all trees and shrubs
- Clean-out and repair of grease drain in kitchen
- Carpet in both offices cleaned
- Windows cleaned
- Dumpster door repaired
- Chairs and tables cleaned
- Two clean-up days held by members, getting a lot done
- Mulch added by many hands - along with the edging, raking, picking-up, power-washing, painting around the exterior of church and Memorial Garden

I would like to take this opportunity to give great thanks for the generous supplies and to the many donors who have graciously helped me through the year. It is your time, skills, talents, and funding that have made all of these accomplishments possible.

Gratefully Yours,

Linda L. Landis

2023 ST. THOMAS WELCA REPORT

WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN AMERICA

WELCA purpose statement: As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world.

The size of the WELCA Group has dwindled, but still continued on with traditional events aided by volunteers throughout the year. Tim Perry serves as the bookkeeper. Agnes Kujala collected money from book sales and quilts and gives it to Tim for deposit.

2023 Highlights

- The Edward R. Aller Scholarship was established in 1992 by the WELCA group in honor of the 25th anniversary of Pastor Aller's ordination. Since that time 59 recipients have been awarded scholarships totaling \$29,500! This year's St. Thomas high school senior was awarded \$500: Delaney Arndt. Delaney was distinguished in school, sports, community, and church activities. The scholarship was provided by Marcia Aller and the Rev. Edward R. Aller Memorial Fund in combination with WELCA. Individuals generously donated \$1,115 to the fund this year.
- The quilters remained active with a reduced force of about 6 workers for much of the year, but had occasional additional volunteers. A total of 80 quilts were donated in October to Lutheran World Relief - delivered by Kent Kujala and Dan Kujala. The quilters also set up a table at the 60th Anniversary in September and Christmas Market in December.
- The Book Sale organized by **Agnes Kujala** had a healthy profit of \$80.00 with many books shared and exchanged.
- St. Thomas continues to be the local collection site for medical equipment and supplies for **World Medical Relief**. We receive many phone calls, donations and referrals from other churches and individuals. Al Skrocki coordinates delivery of St. Thomas medical donations.
- Finally, **Sandi Loso** continued to collect for the Sacred Heart Food Pantry. The poor economy and pandemic have resulted in greater need, but our collections have been steady.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND YOUTH ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

- We furnished a Nursery room to be used for parents with young children that may need a break during service.
- Sunday School was held each week from January through December. One multi-age class was taught for children aged 3-10. Attendance was between 2 and 5 students per week. During the summer months, the curriculum was less structured and taught by volunteers from the congregation including Judith Danziger, Tim Perry and Monica and Delaney Arndt.
- In 2023 we used Cokesbury's *Celebrate Wonder* curriculum, with a variety of activities that engage children of all ages.
- Our Christmas Program was held on December 17. Students put on a short play with songs and helped Pastor Kari tell the Christmas story. The program was directed by Wendy Brozek, Karen Skrocki and Pastor Kari and was very well-received.
- Many thanks to our teachers who volunteered their time and talents to educate our young people – Wendy Brozek, Anna Gartner, Kathie Kline, Marge Noyce, Delaney and Monica Arndt, Judith Danziger and Tim Perry.

COMMUNION CLASS

We had six students complete and celebrate their instruction in Communion! Pastor Kari led the class that was held in one extended session. The students explored Bible stories, learned about why we celebrate the Lord's Supper in worship, participated in numerous hands-on activities as they learned and reflected on the importance of this meal, enjoyed a meal together prepared by a volunteer, and concluded their time by painting their own communion cups which were then used during worship as they helped to serve communion to the congregation. These cups were then given to them as reminders of God's love for them and the gift of grace offered in Communion. It was a great celebration and a wonderful experience for the class.

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Pastor Kari wrote a new curriculum for confirmation students that is flexible to account for students' busy schedules and other obligations. The program is intended to be mostly at-one's-own pace, along with several in-person classes divided throughout the year. The class currently has six students and has held one in-person class so far. More classes will be scheduled for 2024. New students can be added to the class at any time because of the way the class is formatted.

YOUTH OUTREACH

- There was no Vacation Bible School this year due. Plans are in place to hold Vacation Bible School in 2024.
- In place of VBS, we had an abundance of youth activities at our 60th Anniversary Celebration. Children had fun at the large bounce house, lawn games, tattoos, face painting and crafts. Thanks to all of our volunteers who helped to celebrate this special day with our youngest visitors!
- The children paraded during the Grosse Ile Island Fest Parade, using a hand-made banner. They assisted adults in handing out promotional items to the parade audience.

YOUTH DIRECTOR

The paid Youth Director position had been put on hold due to lack of youth membership. Position duties are presently being performed by Tim Perry, Wendy Brozek and Pastor Kari.

Submitted by Wendy Brozek, Tim Perry and Pastor Kari

ADULT EDUCATION

Bible study has been meeting once a week with fellowship, food (brought to share), and study of the bible. Much of the year's study was working our way through the book of Acts. We are currently looking at Paul's letters.

Submitted by Tamara Howes

EVANGELISM COMMITTEE

St. Thomas Evangelism efforts for 2023 began with communications to our extended membership / visitors via postcards to encourage attendance. This effort continued throughout the year and over one hundred cards were mailed.

Valentines were delivered to shut-ins in February.

Pastor Kari Rinas and Anna Gartner continued the practice of hand-delivering "Welcome to Grosse Ile" packages to our new island residents, and we are fully supplied to continue this practice in 2024.

We had a St. Thomas Information table at the Island Fest Parade, The 60th Anniversary Celebration, and The Christmas Market.

Anna and Kari also attended the 2023 Assembly of the Southeast Michigan Synod, ELCA in Port Huron, Michigan in May. It was an inspiring look into the workings of the Synod and a great learning experience of what our partner churches are doing in their communities.

For 2024 Evangelism efforts need to grow to a full committee to accomplish the outreach and growth we all seek. There is an abundance of great social ideas to advance including: a euchre tournament, a chili cook-off, and an outdoor community food pantry. Additional ideas to broaden our work in Christ on Grosse Ile are appreciated. We would also welcome more congregational involvement in delivering new resident welcome packets.

INTERFAITH COUNCIL

Submitted by Anna Gartner

Interfaith is coming back from COVID. For the first time in two years, we were able to do overnights for ChristNet, helping 30 guests. We held our annual Thanksgiving Service which was at the G.I. Presbyterian Church. We are planning more Interfaith activities for 2024.

Submitted by Jeff Kline

COMMUNITY MARKETS

Island Market

Due to the Peace, Love and 60 Anniversary event held in September, the summer island market was not held in 2023. Several of the vendors from previous island markets were at the September anniversary. Future plans for the Island Market are being discussed.

Submitted by Justine Brozek, Island Market Chairperson

Christmas Market

The **Third Annual Christmas Market** was a tremendous success. A very successful Raffle Basket event was added this year and generously filled with donations from the congregation. Vendors and shoppers alike eagerly await the 2024 Market with improvements already in the works.

Submitted by Linda Landis, Christmas Market



St. Thomas Lutheran Positioning Statement:

*St Thomas Lutheran Church is an inviting and caring environment
Nurtured by God's Love where individuals and families
Grow in faith to meet the challenges of life.*

St Thomas Mission:

*Our Mission is
To celebrate God's love through serving
Embrace it in our own lives
Reach out to our neighbors
And actively pass it on to new generations.*

*real people.
real life.
real faith.*