

**Lutheran Church of the Good  
Shepherd**

# **2024 Annual Report**

March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025



# Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Prayer
3. Approval of Agenda with Power to Add
4. Approval of Minutes from the last Congregational Meeting  
March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024
5. Reports
6. 2024-25 Budget
7. New Council Election
8. Closing Devotions

## Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd Annual Meeting Minutes: March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2024

**Present Council Members:** Paul Campbell (chair), Suzanne McClennan, Madeline Becker, Donny Becker, Peggy Detlor, Kathy Piller, Amer Gill, Sohail Gill

**Regrets:** Scott Burridge

**Present Voting Congregation Members:** attendance list passed around, and everyone was encouraged to fill out the contact info sheet. 37 members signed the sheet.

**Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 10:25 AM, chaired by Paul Campbell. The meeting opened with Prayer and Litany by Pastor Julio. Quorum is declared.

**Agenda:** It was moved by Sandra and seconded by Sharon, and carried that the Agenda be approved.

**Minutes:** It was moved by Laurali and seconded by Carol. It was carried that the minutes of the Annual Meeting held March 12<sup>th</sup> 2023 be approved.

### **2023 Reports:**

The following reports were submitted for the 2023 Annual Report prior to the meeting for members to review. Lorelai acknowledged how well the reports were written.

**Pastors Report:** No questions asked.

**Worship Committee:** Discussion on a potential midsummer service. Carol requests more familiar hymns to be incorporated in the service. Brooks encourages all to put suggestions in the suggestion box and that we have to mind the copywrite.

On Good Friday we are having a service with the First Baptist church. Please sign up for bringing food. The service is at 10:30AM on Good Friday.

**Church Council:** No questions asked.

**Sunday School:** The Sunday school is collecting donations for Project Share. Maddie will donate the funds after Easter.

**Altar Guild:** No questions asked.

**Knitting Group:** Wednesday morning knitting group, and it is open to all (not just knitters). The group is accepting wool donations. A man in the community collects the hats and scarves and other clothes, and distributes them along with food to the homeless. Next time around Christmas please consider donating clothing items, especially men's coats. No questions asked.

**Choir:** No questions asked.

**Property Maintenance & Digital Report:** Donny appreciates the help from Wayne and Ernie for all the projects around the church. Donny discussed the issues regarding copywrite and our videos being removed from the website. Videos are now dated as well. No questions.

**Financial Secretary:** Next year we are cutting back on the offering boxes. Many people don't need them as they are PAR or give cheques. The price of the boxes are increasing. Members who definitely want a box should notify Suzanne. Suzanne encourages members to join PAR or to donate with CanadaHelps. No questions asked.

All reports are accepted as presented.

### **2023-2024 Budget**

The proposed budget was sent out in November. Voting occurred between November 16 and December 3. Everything was approved. 56 accept, 22 didn't vote and 1 abstained.

Q: where does the memorial fund go to?

A: if there is something tangible and meaningful that we need to buy for the church, we will buy it in their name. This is the same with the Sunday school GIC.

Q: For the Conference, are we sending a delegate to the Eastern Synod?

A: Yes, we have selected Suzanne McClennan. Pastor Julio will also be in attendance.

Q: Does council see any major expenses this year?

A: Nothing is planned, hopefully no major expenses. Some landscaping will be required; removing some large bushes etc. We are looking into an electronic sign to replace the current one.

### **Council Elections**

June had left the council when she moved away. The Council introduced themselves. No new additions, no one left the council besides June. All were in favour that the council remains.

Closing Devotions: lead by Paul Campbell

Meeting adjourned at 11:02 AM

Respectfully submitted by Madeline Becker, Recording Secretary

## **Pastor's Report 2024**

### **There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens (Ecclesiastes 3:1)**

I find it hard to believe that nearly five years have passed since I first came to the Church of the Good Shepherd to serve you as pastor. And now, here I am in my final year before retirement. Time truly flies, doesn't it? Yet, as the Holy Scriptures remind us, there is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.

While it may not be entirely accurate to describe 2024 as a "quiet" year, in many ways, it did feel that way. From my perspective, everything ran smoothly throughout the year, and I deeply appreciate the continued support from the Worship Team. The worship services were well planned and organized, and I want to express my gratitude to Brooks, Suzanne, Nicole, and everyone else who offered their time and gifts to ensure everything was in place for each service. Working with the Church Council has also been a smooth and rewarding experience. I value their support and faithful service.

Throughout 2024, I continued to conduct Bible studies every Tuesday morning, made hospital visits, and brought Holy Communion to our members at home. I did my best to be present at almost every activity that took place at Good Shepherd during the year.

Reflecting on my five years with you, I'm reminded of the blessing that our "Shared Ministry" with Trinity in Fort Erie and Faith Church in St. Catharines has been. This partnership has been a true blessing for all three congregations, and I pray that it continues to thrive in the years to come.

Since this is my final report, I pray for a smooth and seamless transition for the new pastor who will follow me and have the honor and blessing of leading these three congregations.

I encourage you to continue serving and worshipping our Lord Jesus with the enthusiasm and faith you are known for. May the Holy Spirit guide you and keep you always.

Peace

Pastor Julio Romero

## From the Good Shepherd Register 2024

### Baptisms:

2 Baptisms on Nov 3<sup>rd</sup> 2024

### Confirmations:

Name n/a	Parents:	Date
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### Transfers:

Edmond Hein	Transferred from St Paul's Lutheran Church	May 5 <sup>th</sup> 2024
Margaret Hein	Transferred from St Paul's Lutheran Church	May 5 <sup>th</sup> 2024
Pam Miller	Transferred from St Paul's Lutheran Church	May 5 <sup>th</sup> 2024
Mary Pauco	Transferred from St Paul's Lutheran Church	May 5 <sup>th</sup> 2024
Steve Pauco	Transferred from St Paul's Lutheran Church	May 5 <sup>th</sup> 2024
Eva Benko-Brown	Transferred from St Paul's Lutheran Church	May 5 <sup>th</sup> 2024

### Marriages:

Name n/a	married to	Name	on date
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### Funerals:

Victor Krause(M) Date of Death Jan. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Date of Service Jan. 26<sup>th</sup> 2024  
(at Patterson FH)

Inge Baumann(M) Date of Death March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Date of Service March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2024  
(at Good Shepherd)

Jeanette Campbell(M) Date of Death April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Date of Service May 11<sup>th</sup> 2024  
(at Fairview Cemetery)

Amelia (Millie) Wallace(M) Date of Death Nov. 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 Date of Service Dec 14<sup>th</sup> 2024  
(at Fairview Cemetery)

(M) Member (NM) Non-Member

## **Worship Committee Report 2024**

In 2024, Good Shepherd held 53 services. Good Friday was co-ordinated by the First Baptist church and the ecumenical service was held in our church building. June 9<sup>th</sup> there was no service at Good Shepherd as all the ELCIC churches from the Niagara Region gathered to worship together at First Lutheran in Port Colborne.

We had 39 communion services (Pastor Julio Romero 24, Rev. Dr. Doreen McFarlane 12, Pastor Jukka Saarinen 2, and Pr. Doug Kramer 1) and 14 non-communion services (Pr. Julia Howard 7, Brooks McClennan 5, and Scott Burridge 2).

Every week a missal was prepared and printed for the Pastor/lay leader, reader and pianist. Donny Becker continued to provide the full missal and available sermons to everyone on the weekly email list. Printed copies were also made available to anyone who requested one for use during our weekly service. One member of our congregation continues to receive a printed sermon delivered to their house weekly. A printed bulletin was also prepared for every service, and copyright reporting was completed using OneLicense for all hymns that are reprinted and/or streamed for our services. Preparation of the missal, bulletin, and copyright reporting takes on average 3.75 hours/week. Just under 200 hours were spent creating this worship material in 2024.

A PowerPoint presentation was created for all our services last year. This is the presentation you see on the 2 TV screens at the front of the church. Each presentation takes a minimum of 1.5 hours to produce.

We have continued to live-stream every service on our Facebook page, and the videos are also available on our website.

The Worship co-ordinator is also responsible for: ordering palms for Palm Sunday, preparing ashes for Ash Wednesday, preparing the Advent Wreath, preparing the sanctuary for special services (moving font for baptisms, collecting pictures of pets, sandbox for All Saints Sunday, hand washing station for Maundy Thursday, get Christmas Eve handheld candles ready...), ordering church supplies as needed (candles, communion wafers...), renewing our subscriptions to SundaysAndSeasons (worship material) and OneLicense (copyright reporting), arranging for and communicating with supply pastor and/or pianist when Pr. Julio and/or Nicole are not scheduled/not able to be with us for services, ensuring the

phone used for filming is charged weekly, and ensuring there are readers for every service.

I would like to thank *everyone* who volunteered to make worship this past year possible.

Thank you to all the worship leaders, Julio, Julia (she will be greatly missed), Doreen, Jukka, Doug, Scott. Thank you, Suzanne and Jan for decorating and arranging flowers in the sanctuary.

Thank you, Suzanne for editing the weekly Prayers of Intercession used by all 3 churches throughout the year to make them more Canadian and more relevant to current events.

Thank you to all the readers: Becky, Scott, Ernie, Janice, Tim, Pat, Suzanne, Paul, Carys, Kasey, Maddie, Dorothy, Manny, Linda, Alice, and Ayomide

Thank you, Donny, for making sure the missal and all other information got out to our members via email every week.

Thank you, Paul, Donny, Carys and Kasey for technical support and being our camera crew.

Thank you, Tim for preparing and running the PowerPoint presentations.

Thank you, Nicole, for your many musical talents, and special thanks to Carol Cowlshaw and Terry Brown for filling in when Nicole was not able to attend.

Thank you to the Altar Guild for preparing communion, and for changing the paraments as needed.

Thank you, Pat, Suzanne, Caryl and JoAnn for being ministers of communion.

Thank you, Janice and Karen for bringing the offering plate forward during the service.

Thank you, Kathy, for making sure we always have toner for the printer.

Thank you, Suzanne, for remaking the Pentecost/Reformation (red) and Advent (blue) paraments from the items we received from St Paul's so that they fit our altar and pulpit, and for making a new fair linen altar tablecloth to replace the old one damaged from age.

To anyone I have forgotten above: THANK YOU

Respectfully submitted,

**Brooks McClennan**

Worship Coordinator



## Church Council Report 2024 and Outlook for 2025

When looking back at 2024 it is exciting to see how we have returned to engaging with our wider regional partners and looking forward to strengthening our relationships with the wider community in the future. Also exciting to see that over the course of the year we saw an increase in attending services in person, growing from around 30-40 people regularly at the beginning of the year to 40-50 as the norm. We also had continued strong interest in our streamed online services with over 144 views each week on average and some services getting many more viewers.

Our Council, Worship Committee and of course Service Leaders have again worked diligently to ensure we have been able to have a continuity of service throughout the year and I want share a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has made this possible. It is through their hard work that Missals are shared with those who cannot attend, services are streamed online and shared for everyone to partake even if they are not comfortable to attend in person or are unable, and our church is prepared each week for us all to attend.

Thank you to Brooks who does an amazing job preparing everything for the service each week, Tim for preparing the power point presentation, and Maddie for running our Sunday school activities. Suzanne, Carol, and Joann, for preparing the altar and cleaning up each week. Everything you do each week ensures that we are able to enjoy our church experience.

Thank you to my peers on Council for another successful year, Maddie Becker (Recording Secretary), Suzanne McClennan (Financial Secretary), Donny Becker (Treasurer), Peggy Detlor (vice-chair), Scott Burrige, Kathy Piller, Amer Gill, Sohail Gill, and Pastor Julio Romero, you have all done an amazing job through difficult circumstances.

Over the course of 2024 we met in council 10 times, we have partnered with our First Baptist colleagues on performing a shared service, we met with our shared ministry partners from St. Catharines and Fort Erie several times and we have welcomed the installment of our new Bishop.

We look forward to our shared upcoming challenges as we navigate future adjustments as we plan for Pastor Julio's retirement and the opportunities it will bring as we discover where our journey will take us as a faith community.

2025 looks to be an exciting time for us, we will be finding opportunities to have more shared services region wide, continue to engage with our First Baptist friends as they navigate change this year and altogether look for more ways to positively impact our wider community.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Campbell Church Council Chairperson

## Sunday School Report 2024

To whom it may concern,

2024 was a great year for the Sunday School group. Lessons were developed according to the church calendar using online resources. Lessons typically included a printout worksheet and a colouring page.

Before Sunday School begins each week, all the children and teens sit upstairs to take in the beginning of the church service. The Pastor often gave a Children's Message before the first readings. Sunday School was held downstairs after the Children's Message. Generally, lessons have been taught to 5-7 regular students with 2-4 extra students that attended occasionally. Ages ranged from 7 to 15 for the regular students, with a few 2-4-year-olds joining occasionally. Sunday School typically included a snack and drink for the kids, followed by a lesson, an activity page and bible reading. Previous students that have since been Confirmed would often take over teaching Sunday School lessons if I was unable to attend church. I am very appreciative of their help!

Typically, one week per month there is no Sunday School lesson, and the kids often would volunteer to read at the front of the church. This allows kids to get more familiar with the church sermon, gets them participating in the service, and gives the Sunday school teacher a bit of a break. At the end of the year, on the last Sunday before Christmas, the Sunday school and a few adult volunteers sang Silent Night in front of the church (see image below). For doing such a good job, the kids got to pick a prize and a candy cane out of the prize box, with lots of items purchased from the Heritage Christian Bookstore.

Moving into 2025, we are hoping to continue to have the kids participate in the services through reading, volunteering and hopefully running coffee hour once or twice. We would also like to have the group up front singing again as it was a really fun experience, and the congregation seemed to enjoy it!

Respectfully submitted,

Madeline Becker  
*Sunday School Teacher*



## **Altar Guild Report 2024**

We had a good year with altar care. It was great to have some of the paraments from St Paul's. "Thank you " to them.

Suzanne has made a new cloth for the altar which is a big improvement.

It's very good to have Joanne as co-partner. I needed her a lot this past year. We look forward to this year

Respectfully submitted,

Caryl Upper and Joann Bearss

## **Knitting Group Report 2024**

We meet every Wednesday morning from 9:30am to 11:30am. All are welcome!

This year a large box of knitted squares were sent to Barb's Baskets at Wellwood. More than 20,000 Wellwood afghans have been given out to cancer patients of all ages! Again, this year we supported the Mom to Mom Box Program at Trinity Lutheran Church in Fort Erie. Our hats, mitts, and scarves were also given to Project Share, Birchway and The Bridge.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Manning

## **Choir Report 2024**

The choir has been such a blessing to our church, as we all gather with one another by using our singing talents. We have been eagerly learning a variety of praise songs, anthems, and hymns. The congregation is a great support and encouragement for the choir when they perform and is truly appreciated. We are so happy when we enjoy fellowship sharing together joyfully making music to the Lord!

Thank you choir for your dedication, time and gifts as we sing praises to the Lord!

Thank you!

Respectfully submitted.

Nicole Foster Music Director

## **Building Maintenance & Digital Report 2024**

The following are some of the building and property maintenance that was done in 2024:

Jan and I removed all the overgrown bushes from the front church garden.

I painted the curb area near the entrance of the church building a bright yellow to indicate a tripping hazard.

Jeff Detlor and I replaced most of the sink taps in the church washrooms and the sacristy room. Most of the taps were leaking and replacement parts were no longer available. We also repaired a leaking fixture in the men's washroom.

Wayne and Ernie repaired the broken-down lettering on the top of the Dorchester Road street-sign. Thanks to Kathy Piller for having the new lettering made up.

We had the main hydraulic hose replaced on the elevator. That hose is dated and must be replaced every 5-10 years.

We had to have the defective main gas valve replaced on the basement furnace.

The following are some of the ongoing jobs that happened throughout this past year:

- Replacing bulbs/lenses for the church lighting and Exit/Emergency lighting
- Attend and monitor annual fire safety checks and quarterly elevator inspections
- Replacing furnace filters
- Salting and clearing snow from the front entrance
- Keeping the Dorchester Rd. sign up to date
- Purchasing maintenance and cleaning supplies for the church
- Maintaining stock in the kitchen for coffee-hour
- Buying wine for communion
- Assisting in church cleaning as necessary
- Seasonal & informational updates to the website and Facebook page
- Weekly emails with updates for the congregation

I am thankful to Ernie, Wayne and Jeff for all their help with maintenance at our church and to Suzanne, Brooks and Scott & Becky for their help keeping the kitchen supplies stocked when I fell behind.

### **Social Media:**

We continued to use Facebook to live-stream our Sunday church services for those people who weren't ready to come back to in-person worship. Weekly service video viewings are usually around 150 views, with a record amount of 826 views for our December 22, 2024 service. We currently have 1.1k Facebook followers. It is amazing that people all over the world are able to view our service videos. For those not on Facebook, the videos can be viewed *live*, on our website as well. We are thankful that we can keep connected through the internet and have the option to watch our weekly services in the comfort of our own homes when necessary. I am thankful to Paul who

continues to record the weekly videos. We continued to use the Zoom platform for most Council meetings for those Council members that are out of town, along with in-person meetings for those that can attend. I am always thankful to Suzanne and Pastor Julio, for supplying the updated seasonal messages for our Facebook page and Website. And thanks Suzanne for keeping the digital calendar up to date on our website Home Page. If you get a chance, please visit our Facebook page, and our website at [www.lcgs.ca](http://www.lcgs.ca) . In the last year we have added a link to our website Home page where anyone can download and view Pastor Julio's weekly sermons whether he is preaching at our church or at Trinity. For the weekly emails, I thank Brooks who lays the groundwork for each weekly email. Together we attempt to keep the church congregation up to date on all the happenings at our church. Currently we have about 70 households that receive our weekly emails.

Respectfully submitted,

*Donny Becker*

Treasurer, Maintenance, Communications & Social Media Administrator

## **Financial Secretary Report 2024**

Thank you to everyone who continues to support the church with your offerings as you are able. In 2024, our total income from offerings was lower than in 2023, but close to the amount we received in 2022. We were blessed to receive a special \$10,000 donation from St. Paul's, which helped us surpass our 2023 income from all sources by about \$2,000 (excluding interest earned). Though we lost some members due to age or relocation, we also gained new contributors. While we received the usual surge in donations in December, our offerings for 2024 were down by approximately \$4,000 compared to 2023.

This year, we made a significant change in how we provide offering envelopes, which included reassigning numbers for some donors. The first fifty numbers are now dedicated to envelope users, and there are about 14 spots still available. Some people who donate via PAR, Canada Helps, or through monthly or annual cheques have indicated they do not need envelopes. Rest assured, everyone still has a unique number, and blank envelopes are available for donations. This change helps reduce the

cost of ordering unused envelopes, a cost that rises each year. If you didn't receive a box of envelopes but would like one, or if you no longer need yours, please let me know.

If it works for you, please consider enrolling in PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance). Donations are withdrawn from your bank account around the 20th of each month. You can start with a minimum amount and increase it later through envelopes if your financial situation changes. You can also cancel at any time by notifying me by the beginning of the month. If you're interested, I can provide forms and answer any questions you may have. Currently, approximately 49% of our donations come through PAR and Canada Helps.

Please remember, to remain a voting member, you need to make at least one recorded contribution per year, regardless of the amount, and couples are counted together.

While our income has remained steady, our costs have risen due to inflation just as yours have. We deeply appreciate your faithful contributions, no matter the amount. Your generosity helps maintain our worship space, support our pastor, provide worship leaders and musicians throughout the year, prepare the services and PowerPoint, offer online services, and fund our other programs. These contributions allow us to grow in faith and continue the mission of our church.

Stewardship is not about meeting a budget. Our budget is based on expected income, but our donations are ultimately an act of gratitude for the blessings we've received. Giving is a response to God's generosity, where we joyfully share our time, talents, and treasures to further His work and support the church's mission.

Respectfully submitted, Suzanne McClennan, Financial Secretary

### **2024-25 Budget and Treasurer's Comments**

The 2025 proposed budget was sent out by email to our voting members and hard copies were available on November 16<sup>th</sup> 2024. Voting occurred between November 16 and December 6th. We thank all our voting members that took the time to read over and voted for our 2025 Proposed Budget. We ended up with 55 accept, 17 didn't vote and 1 noted abstained.

Attached to this Annual Report is the updated 2025 Budget complete with actual year end figures.

This 2024 Annual Report was compiled by Donny Becker and proof-read by the Council.