



2023
Bulletin of Annual Reports

2024 Congregational Council

Kathy Arndt, *treasurer*

Justin Cooley

Kim Criswell*

Ken Criswell

Kathy Guffey*, *vice president*

Kristie Koch

Lisa Rabuck*, *secretary*

Michelle Shearer, *president*

Randy Sprenkle

* denotes council member in their second term

Pastor's Report

Dear United In Christ,

In so many ways, 2023 has felt like an absolute whirlwind! This past year has been *packed* with unexpected opportunities and newfound courses for ministry. Looking around at all that we have accomplished in the past calendar year, it seems that there have been a few key themes that have shown themselves as readily apparent through the year. First, it seems that 2023 held more opportunities for **mutual ministry** with our local community and denominational partners than any year we've had together. Second, this past year certainly has been informed by a faithful experiment of **shared leadership** that has the opportunity to provide us with an avenue for exploring new and exciting models of sustainable leadership within the congregation and the Synod. Finally, 2023 proved that in all things, you have a way of approaching ministry that is **uniquely UIC** and serves as a fresh and exciting expression of what it means to *be* the church. Together, these three themes have made for an exciting and encouraging year together that has given me great courage for all that God may have for us together ahead! Let's take a look!

Mutual Ministry

This past year saw our community continue to build upon strong partnerships with the ministry partners around us. It has been a real joy getting to know so many of our neighbors from Milton Lutheran Church (MLC) and Christ's Evangelical Lutheran Church (CELC) over the past year. By building relationships with Pastor Gary (MLC) and the folks within both congregations, we have been able to collectively serve the Milton and Lewisburg communities in some really exciting ways.

One of the biggest ways we built upon our congregational leaderships was in the expansion of our summer day camp programming last July. For the second year in a row, we were able to partner with Camp Mount Luther to host a week of programming at West Milton Park with volunteers from both UIC and MLC helping to plan and lead throughout the week. After welcoming about fifteen campers in 2022, this past year saw our program launch with over *thirty-five* campers!



But camp wasn't the only way we came together to meet the kids of our communities. This year we built upon a lot of the opportunities we piloted together in the wake of the pandemic. Returning for our second annual "Trunk-or-Treat" event last October, we had the joy of greeting *over 280 kids* from the surrounding community for a time of safe and wholesome fun together! It was certainly all hands on deck, but it was only made possible by having nearly forty trunks setup from members across all three congregations! This was a trend we kept going into the winter when we held out most well attended Christmas Craft Workshop to date, welcoming about forty kids across a few dozen craft stations sponsored by all three churches! All of this took place on top of the continued joint youth group we continued to hold with MLC through 2023.



Even then, though, kids weren't the only reasons we came together in helpful and life-giving ways. For our second year in a row now, we have continued to provide an incredibly life-giving joint Grief Support Group for members across all three congregations. With this group in mind, this year we once again returned for our "Blue Christmas" service, this year held at CELC. We've gathered together for Pet Blessings, carols through town, coordinated booths at the Milton Harvest Festival, and for meal preparations through Bucknell's Community Engagement team. We even got sixty Lutherans together to head to Williamsport for a ballgame at the Crosscutters this past summer!

It has been an absolute joy getting to build these relationships with our Lutheran neighbors surrounding us in the area. But for all of the excitement that it has built, the true *importance* of those relationships was on full display early in 2023 following the fire at Milton Developmental Services (MDS). In the wake of that tragedy, our communities were able to rather seamlessly come together in the immediate aftermath and for the longer-term recovery by providing meals for the residents who remained at MDS without a usable kitchen and for those who had been displaced to a local hotel. Being able to rally quickly with our neighbors, particularly at MLC, allowed us to not only help meet immediate needs, but to provide meaningful care for the residents who had their lives upended overnight. This moment also then served as an opportunity for us to learn together with our neighbors as we gathered for Vicar Katy's Lenten series last year, learning more about how to meet our neighbors with intellectual disabilities and what resources are available for them within the community.



In the end, while these relationships has been so meaningful in their own right, their true value has been in the ways it has allowed us to come together quickly and seamlessly for the sake of our larger communities. I'm so encouraged by this continued course of shared ministry across our communities and look forward to seeing where it can take us into the future!

Shared Leadership

Since January of 2022 (two years ago), I had been contracted with Christ's Lutheran to serve as their "on-call" interim pastor. I was available primarily for emergency pastoral care, funerals, home communion visitation, and to be regularly present during Council Meetings. I was contracted at about five hours each week for this work. However, by March of last year, it had become apparent that the limited nature of that time together was becoming an impediment to the continued mission and life of that community. The totality of mission at CELC was underserved by such a limited pastoral role.

At the same time, CELC found themselves in a difficult position where three separate pastoral candidate they had been actively interviewing withdrew from their call processes. Across all three candidates it was becoming clear that not many pastors were interested in uprooting their lives to come *into* the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Despite being in the search for a full-time called pastor, drawing someone into the region was proving difficult and mobility *within* the synod was largely at a stalemate.



It was at this point, then, that our leadership began conversations about how we might be able to best be in relationship throughout the continued pastoral transition. Working together, we began a new contract this past Spring that has allowed for me to serve, essentially, as the half-time interim pastor for CELC. This has given me the chance to be present with them about two Sunday mornings each month and allowed me to be present in their office on a more regular basis. This additional presence has been incredibly helpful for me to get to know them better as individuals and get to know better the scope of CELC's calling within the Lewisburg community.

Importantly, this contract was only made possible by the support of Vicar Katy and her time here at UIC while she completed her year of pastoral internship. As we formed the new contract here, Vicar Katy was called upon to more formally lead worship each Sunday, for which I'm also incredibly grateful! Moving towards the end of the Summer and into the Fall, both congregations' Councils agreed to extend the contract for pastoral coverage during the continued pastoral transition with the addition that Vicar Katy would also join the rotation of worship leaders at CELC. During this time, Vicar Katy was also finishing her seminary education through United Lutheran Seminary. As of December, she completed that work and was approved for ordination as a pastor while being assigned to the Upper Susquehanna Synod!



And now, at this point in the new year, we have open doors to a number of possibilities ahead! The opportunity immediately in front of us is that Vicar Katy's paperwork as a pastoral candidate is now able to go in front of CELC's Call Committee for consideration. Over the next few weeks, the Call Committee will have the opportunity to review her profile, interview her, listen to her preach, and decide whether or not to recommend her to their Church Council as a potential candidate for call, a decision that would then need to be voted on by the congregation as a whole. Essentially, the road ahead is the same that was taken with previous pastoral candidates as the Call Committee does its due diligence in discerning a good match for the congregation. The only real difference is that, in this case, CELC gets the opportunity to meet and hear from the potential candidate *well* before the time they would normally be called in for a vote!

Additionally, this process would leave the door open to continue exploring shared pastoral leadership with us here at UIC. Effectively, CELC and UIC would have the opportunity to flagship a different sort of model for pastoral leadership by exploring what it would look like to have *two* full-time pastors working fully in *two* congregations. There are certainly more conversations to be had, but it's an opportunity that would remain! In the meantime, we will continue to pray for continued discernment as we seek out the possibilities that God may provide throughout this course!

Uniquely UIC

Yet, throughout the entirety of this past year with all of its partnership and collaboration, UIC has remained a place unlike any other. Year after year, you continue to impress me with your sense of ministry and purpose and the ways in which you follow both to creatively meet the needs of the world around us and the church to which we belong! 2023 was no different in that regard!

This creativity has historically served you well in the ministries you have built over the years. You don't need to look much further than OAKS and the Baby Steps Diaper Pantry to see two resounding examples of how you have always thought about how you can use your gifts in new ways for our neighbors. This past year, both OAKS and the Diaper Pantry saw a return to fuller form following the pandemic. The numbers from each (see their reports) tell the story that there is still very clearly a need for these ministries as both encountered near-record setting engagement in the past year.



The same can be said about the continued support for the monthly distribution of food through the ElderShare program. This past year saw us build upon that ministry, partnering with Central Pennsylvania Food Bank to deliver monthly shelf-stable food boxes to senior citizens in our community who would otherwise be unable to pick up a box from local distribution sites. This past year, we even had the opportunity to return and *pack* some of those boxes at CPF’s warehouse in Williamsport!



Perhaps most emblematically, this past year you all leveraged your creative approach to faith formation in delightful ways. 2023 represented our first *full* year of our Theology on Tap study group. I have really come to think of this gathering as an incubation chamber for the questions of faith that are regularly on peoples’ minds! It has been a delight being able to gather with folks for a shared table at Rusty Rail week after week to engage with the questions that are on your minds! It was just as fun to build upon the relationship there and host our first ever “Beers and Carols” event where we filled the entire first floor of the restaurant to sing some Christmas favorites this past December!



Speaking of Christmas, though, this past year we had the joy of hosting our first “Faith and Fun” Christmas worship service! This was a great way to engage our students *during* worship for Christmas Eve. I so admire the ways in which you continue to embrace creative faith formation for our students here at UIC. From daycamp, to journeying with seven students for the return of our Communion Day last summer, to the weekly gatherings with Ms. Sherry after worship, to giving space for our kids to lead us in prayer and worship responsibilities, the ways in which you uniquely empowered the kids of UIC gives me tremendous hope and courage for the church!

Moreover, the unique perspective you bring to the larger church and our engagement within the world has also allowed *me* to engage in ministry in new ways. This past year I completed my second year serving on Synod Council which has allowed me to engage with the



larger perspective of the Upper Susquehanna Synod as we seek to be faithful stewards of this corner of God’s kingdom. Additionally, your heart for engagement with the world is what gave me the encouragement to accept a position on the Policy Council of Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of Pennsylvania (LAMPa) this past September. After travelling with seven folks from UIC for LAMPa’s “Lutheran Day at the Capitol” last Spring, I found that it was a natural partnership to engage with the church in this advocacy capacity. This relationship with LAMPa, in turn, paved the way for our Fall study series on “Faith and Civic



Life,” which catalyzed incredibly important questions about our course of discipleship and civic responsibility in the world!

And, of course, your unique approach to ministry and identity was put to use as a tremendous gift for the church in the completion of Vicar Katy’s internship with us this past summer. Just as you have served as a gracious place for me to grow and continue learning as a first-call pastor in the past six and a half years, so too have you extended that grace as a safe place for such learning to Vicar Katy in her own pastoral development. In that work, you have helped provide the church with one more gifted pastor equipped. More – as she and I have discussed many times – you have uniquely equipped Vicar Katy with a passion for a different context of ministry than what she had been accustomed to prior to arriving with us at UIC. In this, you all have shared your *wonderfully* unique gift of helping to form new pastors in a mutually joy-filled way!



On the whole, your continued passion and flair for ministry serves as great encouragement not only to me individually, but to our larger synod as a whole. Whether you realize it or not, Lutherans and leaders from across the Synod keep their eyes on you all and pay attention (typically with awe) to all that you set yourselves to from atop the hill. I cannot stress enough just how grateful I am for the incredible witness to God’s continued movement that you bring to the table! And that’s to say nothing about the spirit of joy you bring to it all along the way!



What comes next?

When I say God only knows what comes next, I really mean it! As we move into this new year, I am looking forward to all the possibilities that may be found ahead. In fact, we will be doing some of that work with increased intentionality as we heed God’s continued call for our shared future under the umbrella of our “2024-WARD” campaign! Throughout the year ahead, you will have all sorts of opportunities to engage in conversations about where we are as a community and where we feel the Holy Spirit’s continued tug within our



community. I will be excited to see what comes as we look “2024-WARD” together!

In the meantime, I will simply remain grateful for our continued partnership in ministry and mission together! I trust that we will continue to find incredible ways to use our gifts for the sake of the neighbors God places in our midst. I trust that we will continue to carve paths of joy in worship and fellowship, giving thanks for all that God has worked in, with, and through us. I trust that the question of “what’s next?” is one we will face with a spirit of hope for all that may yet be to come! I trust that, in all things, my gratitude for you will only grow as we continue this journey together.

Thanks, UIC!

Your, united in Christ,



United In Christ Lives in Transition

2023 Baptisms

Olivia Hauck

Baptized 6/4/23

2023 Affirmations of Baptism (Confirmation)

Dylan Cromwell

Confirmed 6/4/23

Emma Danowsky

Confirmed 6/4/23

Gabbie Heckmann

Confirmed 6/4/23

2023 New Members

Brandon Baker

Jeff Rowe

McKenzie Baker

Grant Rowe

Blaize Baker

Gwynn Rowe

Delayne Baker

Grady Rowe

Jaxon Baker

Victoria Tyrell

Lindsay Howerter

Natalia Tyrell

Emma Howerter

Will Tyrell

Ali Howerter

Marianne Yeagley

Veda Howerter



2023 Funerals

Alice Snyder	d. 3/23/23
Pamela Wright *	d. 6/14/23
Martha Ketchem	d. 10/14/23
Lee Snyder *	d. 11/5/23
Marie Tanner	d. 12/23/23
Peg Swinehart	d. 12/24/23

**denotes individuals who were not members of UIC, but for whom UIC provided services*

Parish Administrator’s Report

UIC ended the year with a deficit of \$3,343.

UNRESTRICTED INCOME

\$122,651.04	Offerings in Church
\$22,716.54	Offering through Tithely
\$16,385.92	CELC
\$5,000.00	Money moved from Memorial to Unrestricted
\$350.00	Facility Rental
\$85.08	Amazon Smiles
\$83.00	Thrivent Choice Dollars

\$167,271.58 TOTAL UNRESTRICTED INCOME

UNRESTRICTED EXPENSES	BUDGETED	ACTUAL
Administrative	\$24,526.00	\$25,768.32
Benevolence	\$8,000.00	\$9,500.00
Capital Fund Contribution	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00
Christian Education	\$1,650.00	\$1,562.56
Employee FICA Tax	\$3,483.00	\$4,381.16
Evangelism	\$1,278.00	\$767.71
Fellowship	\$1,420.00	\$1,440.28
Outreach	\$1,500.00	\$979.25
Pastoral	\$84,417.00	\$83,829.18
Property	\$28,410.00	\$28,501.17
Youth Activities	\$376.00	\$0.00
Worship and Music	\$10,143.00	\$11,485.32
Totals	\$167,603.00	\$170,614.95



Throughout the year you also generously gave the following.

Advent Offerings	\$390.00
Capital Express Fund (+ Matching funds from anonymous donor)	\$56,414.14
ELCA Good Gifts	\$380.00
ELCA World Hunger	\$65.00
Harvest Home Sunday	\$150.00
Lenten Offerings	\$520.00
Lutheran Disaster Response	\$90.00
Souper Bowl Sunday	\$210.00
Valentine’s Day Care Packaging for our College Students	\$282.29
Total	\$58,501.43

Submitted by Terri Cromwell

Property Committee Report

Maintenance Items Completed in 2023:

1. Snow Removal - Continued with Mike Culp Trucking to remove snow and salt parking lot and walks for \$65/hr + salt cost
Snow Removal - Obtained Mike Culp Trucking to remove snow and salt parking lot and walks for \$65/hr + salt cost.
2. Shrubbery Maintenance - Terri Cromwell will take over shrubbery maintenance for 2024.
3. Handrail Repair North Stairwell - After 3 failed attempts, will hopefully make final repair using 5" self tapping screws into brick within next month.

Projects Completed in 2022:

1. Exterior Woodwork and Belfry Painting - Completed by Jim Ardnt for \$21,800, \$1,600 less than quoted, due to less labor and material needed for belfry. Next lowest bid was \$32,925. Steve Brown will repair and paint deteriorated woodwork in 2024.
2. SS Addition Roof Completion - GSH Roofing who replaced leaking membrane roof over restroom area in 2022, will complete remainder of membrane roof and shingle area over stairwell in April 2024 for \$43,800, \$1,368 more than quoted in 2022.
3. Electric Supply Contract for 2024 - Changing from Direct Energy to Better Buy for an \$1,800 annual savings. This is 12 months fixed, no cancellation fee, no cost to make changes at any time to follow lower price, or extend contract, if in our favor.



Future Projects to Consider

1. Recoat and restripe parking lot
2. Increase door glass size - 3 doors - Fellowship Hall, 2 doors to Office Hallway
3. Polish / Seal Basement Floor
4. Paint Interior Walls / Woodwork
5. Remodel Kitchen including new floor
6. Paint and install vinyl floor in Narthex and hallway to elevator. Have flooring on hand.
7. Install interior & exterior signage
8. Timers - Replace water heater and Narthex heat timers
9. Investigate Solar Energy.

Submitted by Ken Criswell

Fellowship Ministry Report

New Beginnings:

A new yet familiar group started in September at UIC in 2023. Fellowship became a dual group of the old Social Ministry team, now along with the Outreach team, allowing more opportunities to bring our Church families together.

Fun Gatherings:

In October we did a Corn Maze at Ard/s farm.

At our Congregational meeting in November, Fellowship decided to take over Social Hour and surprise everyone with sandwiches and other food.

December, we threw a mini craft session with Faith and Fun in the fellowship hall. Bringing together a few crafts, we invited the kids and their families in the Church to make a craft to hang on our tree in the hall, to showcase that everyone in the Church has a special place. The crafts were brought in and run by other congregants to bring everyone together.

Kids just want to have fun:

November brings chilly air and a perfect opportunity to bring the kids of UIC together. We had our first Fellowship ran Kids' Night! Smores Movies and Games was a hit with tasty treats and time well spent laughing and enjoying board games.

Join the Fellowship team and see the new and exciting things we have planned for this year! We are open to everyone and can't wait to bring us all closer together in UIC and with our sister Churches.

Submitted by Al Stark



Rich Huff Committee Report

During 2023, The Huff Committee gave out 15,700 diapers at The Baby Steps Diaper Pantry. This is the 2nd highest year to date.

The committee also gave out four scholarships of \$500 each to area high school seniors, bought 24 backpacks, food for The Lewisburg Summer Lunch Program, and Christmas presents for a local needy family. We gave money to our local Boy Scout troop to make improvements on their food trailer.

Since there were no fundraisers during the pandemic, grants were gotten in the amount of \$11,000. In 2023, The Rich Huff raffle raised \$4000.

Submitted by Shirley McPherrin

OAKS SENIOR CENTER

INCOME		EXPENSE	
Meal Donation	\$1,189.00	Food	\$798.27
CommunityAid	\$133.32	Supplies	\$194.57
Offerings	\$50.00	Bingo Prizes (2 months)	\$100.36
Rummage Sale	\$533.02	Activity/Speakers	\$504.73
		4 Shelving Units (Senior Express Food Boxes)	\$250.16
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,905.34	TOTAL EXPENSE	\$1,848.09

In 2023 we had 39 people attend OAKS Senior Center for the very first time!

Senior Attendance												
Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Total
30	33	31	37	43	46	41	45	58	54	54	50	522



OAKS SENIOR CENTER

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

OAKS Senior Center had a surplus of \$57.25 for the year, which wouldn't have been possible without the following items being donated: 10 months of bingo prizes, bone-in hams from UIC members, pork ribs and ground beef by National Beef in Selinsgrove, Bucknell University's Office of Civic Engagement gave us leftover tomatoes and apples which we used to make a tomato salad and the apples were put out for participants to help themselves to, Central Pa Food Bank gave us rolls, cheese and a variety of desserts, Jack Stiber donated chicken and rice soup, and miscellaneous food items were donated by OAKS committee members.

In September, OAKS celebrated it's 10th year!!

OAKS purchased four shelving units to store the food boxes for Senior Express.

One of our participants knitted winter hats for everyone at OAKS.

Lewisburg Senior Center resumed coming to OAKS in May. Lewisburg Senior Center is budgeted to travel to one location per month and they chose OAKS Senior Center. Lewisburg Senior Center pays for Rabbit to pickup their seniors, bring them to OAKS, then pick them up and take them home. It only cost the person \$0.50 and the Lewisburg Senior Center pays the remainder of Rabbit fees.

Leftovers from lunch were taken to Haven Ministries, a homeless shelter in Sunbury. OAKS gave Haven Ministries baked spaghetti, mac and cheese, stewed tomatoes, and chicken casserole.

OAKS committee team made 30+ lunches for Camp Mount Luther Day Camp participants.



OAKS SENIOR CENTER

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

List of activities and speakers OAKS had in 2023

- Game: 2 Truths, 1 Lie with Terri Cromwell
- Snowflake craft: Kim McCarty, Community Programs Specialist from Geisinger 65 Forward
- SilverSneakers Stability: Jill Moser
- Chair Volleyball with Terri Cromwell
- Dig Furniture Bank: Emily Gorski
- Importance of Smoke Detectors: Brian Heckman, White Deer Fire Company
OAKS purchased a non-hardwired smoke detector, and batteries, 1 per household, to any that need one. 17 households said they would like one.
- Ruby Throated Hummingbirds: Dick Hess
- Dedicated Nursing Associates: Colby Kratzer and Gabby Reed
- Balloon animals and art: Weaver's Balloons
- Alzheimer Association: Taryan Wilk
- Scams: PA State Trooper Robert Evanchick Jr.
- Made Christmas cards with Terri Cromwell

~ Terri Cromwell, OAKS Coordinator

