

The Peace Stewardship Team met monthly in 2023 to assess our year-to-date operating expenses relative to income and our performance as a church in carrying out good stewardship practices for our available time, talent, and treasures. Recommendations by the team were presented to staff to help navigate our mission and vision activities for the year.

While good stewardship practices are encouraged throughout the year, a Fall theme entitled “Giving Thanks to God” was presented to members, and it focused on creation, family, and each other. A series of videos on “Why I Give” was presented over 4 weeks.

Commitment cards were distributed to members for their prayerful consideration and to help us with our estimates of giving for budgeting in 2024. For 2024, Peace has received donation commitments from 189 households totaling \$757,993, compared to our 2024 budget for regular donations (General Fund) of \$1,293,000 or 59%. If you’ve yet to submit a commitment card for 2024 and would like to, please contact the church office or download one from our website.



We are excited to provide another update on our Building for the Future initiative. This year, Peace partnered with Rogers Krajnak Architects (RKA) to develop a Master Facilities Plan for our building. A Master Facilities Plan provides a blueprint for the future of our building and grounds over the next 5-10 years. Our goal is to ensure we continue to fulfill Peace’s vision statement by creating a Plan that will guide how and in what order we should invest in our building through maintenance, upgrades, renovations, or additions.

Here are some highlights from the past year:

- Conducted a deep-dive into our existing building conditions
- Developed detailed electronic drawings of the facilities and grounds
- Forecasted our future needs for each area: Worship; administration; outreach and community use; adult and family education; general building needs; and outdoor areas
- Conducted a workshop with members of the congregation to brainstorm future building ideas
- Developed preliminary master facility plan concepts to test with the congregation

Expect to hear more from us in the coming year about the concepts developed by RKA and to gather your input on how the congregation would like to position Peace to continue to thrive for the next 60+ years.

We are thankful for your passion for Christ and continued support of Peace! Watch for more news and ways to get involved coming soon.

Sincerely,
The “Building for the Future” Committee

Questions - Contact Lynn Cory at lynn.cory@gmail.com



“You will be enriched in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.”
– 2 Corinthians 9:11

Dear Peace,
Peace continues to move into the future that God has in store for us. It has been exciting for the staff and us to see so many new faces in worship and service. We grew in terms of committed pledging households in 2023. This makes us excited for the future.

Throughout the year we have been working with Rogers Krajnak Architects, to begin the process of analyzing an update to our building. Some of you were invited to be a part of the design charrette where we envisioned what could be done. It is obvious that much of our facility is in need of updating. We also have the opportunity to explore how we can use our building to engage the community and our members better. In 2024 we will be holding a variety of gatherings to hear what resonates with you.

As you read through this report, take note of how people of all ages and demographics are impacted through the ministries Peace offers. It is only through your generosity this is possible. We are grateful for you. We continue to love God, neighbor, and self.

-Pastors Doug Warburton & Tony Katko

A YEAR IN REVIEW | 2023

CARE TEAM

Our Care Team volunteers continue to support Peace friends through visits, cards, phone calls, flower deliveries and help with transportation during difficult times. We offer GriefShare support meetings for anyone looking for support and comfort during the grief journey. Our prayer line is sent out weekly by email. The sympathy card team sends out notes of support and encouragement following the death of a loved one. Our meal ministry team has offered comforting meals to folks welcoming new babies, recovering from illnesses or going through other life changes. The pastors are available for care and support through spiritual counseling and prayer.

CHANGES AND TRANSITIONS

When we look at the statistics of the church year, the future is bright. We received 46 people into membership in 2023. Online viewership continues to grow with an average of 60 people watching both Sunday worship services each week. There is an average of 60 children participating in Children’s Ministry programming each week. Ten students affirmed their faith through confirmation in the spring. We celebrated 8 weddings and 17 Baptisms. On All Saints Sunday, we celebrated the lives of 15 people who touched this community in ways as unique as they were as individuals. Over 1500 people enjoyed Christmas Eve services in person or online.

FACILITIES

Facility upkeep and maintenance are ongoing as Peace finds itself blessed with both a 61-year-old building as well as a newer section of 20 years. Volunteers as well as professional maintenance teams work to keep our facility hospitable to those who join us onsite for worship and programs. Volunteer teams continue to keep the Peace grounds looking great in both mowing the large lawns as well as tending to garden beds throughout our parking areas. Peace is also partnering with Gahanna Jefferson Schools to provide parking spaces for students during the 3-year construction of the new high school.

OUTREACH

Outreach ministry is the practice of looking beyond yourself to the people around you and sharing the love of Christ as you serve and connect with your community. Peace is blessed with many opportunities to connect and serve. With willing hands and hearts we touch lives both within our congregation, in our local and Central Ohio community, as well as internationally. Peace partners to support organizations in carrying out their mission of service to those in need by providing resources and volunteers. Together, as partners, we can make a bigger impact. Our annual Peace Serves Day involves 200+ volunteers spread out in the community to many of our partners as well as within our church home. An added benefit to service is the fellowship that develops as we work alongside one another, building a deeper faith community.

SMALL GROUPS

At Peace Lutheran Church we feel that small groups are places you can connect with God and others to walk through life together. Over this past year we segmented our small groups into Study, Service and Social. We introduced new groups like A League of Ordinary Gentlemen, Thriving in the Third, Third of Life, Spiritual Growth Group and more. When you connect in a small group at Peace you will find support, encouragement, and friendship.

FAMILY MINISTRY

Here at Peace we focus on whole family ministry. Ministry to bring households together as well as “Connect Events” that bring together ALL walks of life.

CHILDREN MINISTRY

Our Sunday School program had a record number of registrations, along with well attended events like the Easter Egg Hunt, Trunk-or-Treat, Walk-thru Live Nativity and more. Children and families continued to learn through classes including First Communion, Bible Reading Class, Children’s Choir, plus Advent & Lenten Family Kits. Two overnight retreats were offered for both children and families, while service projects like the GRIN Bag drop-offs were ways that families can serve together. Vacation Bible School saw over 110 volunteers and over 225 children singing, playing, growing and learning together.

CONFIRMATION

Confirmation Students are learning what it means to be on a lifelong journey following Jesus alongside parents/trusted adults. In Confirmation, students practice navigating through the Bible and gain new understanding in their Lutheran faith through the 10 Commandments, Apostles Creed, Lord’s Prayer, Sacraments, Bible Stories, and service. We currently have 17 students registered in Confirmation at Peace.

STUDENT MINISTRY

Students gather for Youth Group, Bible Study, overnight events, Mission Trips (near and far), as well as plug into the broader life and church family through events & service opportunities. Why do we gather? To refocus on what matters most (loving God, neighbor, and self) in a fun, safe, and loving space; all while being surrounded by adults who care!

WORSHIP AND ARTS

In 2023 Worship and Arts continued to grow into an inclusive and supportive environment for musicians, poets, artists, and creatives to use their gifts to glorify God and enhance the worship experience for all attending Peace. The Traditional Choir, Bells of Peace, Contemporary ConneXions, Praise Band, Organist, and special guests thank you for your ongoing support. Also special thanks to everyone who helps this ministry with decorating for the holidays throughout the year. May 2024 bring continued growth, both in persons and faith.


WORSHIP TECHNOLOGY TEAM

Peace Lutheran Church’s Worship Technology team has a rotating schedule of volunteers & staff to run our multi-media equipment. This team allows not only for an in-person worship experience but also for others who are unable to be onsite to participate either through live streaming or posted YouTube videos. In 2023 a big project the team took on was to relocate the A/V-Tech equipment in the ConneXions Center from the back of the room to just behind the stage. This allows for smoother worship team communications and also clears the room’s floor for extracurricular activities such as basketball, Camp Friendship, VBS, and various other groups. This ministry continues to play a large role in the worship experiences, and we are hopeful to continue growing with more volunteers in 2024.

FINANCIAL REPORT | 2023

Financial Report			
Unaudited Income Statement for the Period January 1 - December 31, 2023			
	2023 Actuals	2023 Budget	Actual vs Budget
			Favorable/(Unfavorable)
Revenue			
Reg Donations	1,241,050	1,350,000	(108,950)
All Other Gifts	92,584	74,290	18,294
Investment Activity	19,442	6,000	13,442
Endowment	85,365	35,405	49,960
Total Revenue	1,438,441	1,465,695	(27,254)
Expenses			
Administration/Office	325,673	342,318	16,645
Worship	455,286	460,391	5,105
Members	182,992	188,220	5,228
Community	170,357	164,976	(5,381)
Building	184,941	261,167	76,226
Endowment	28,789	30,900	2,111
Finance	16,492	17,900	1,408
Total Expenses	1,364,530	1,465,872	101,342
Net Surplus/(Deficit)	73,911	(177)	74,088

	As of	As of	Change
Cash Position	Dec 31, 2023	Dec 31, 2022	Increase/(Decrease)
Unrestricted	536,690	652,679	(115,989)
Restricted	163,363	155,011	8,352
Endowment	951,183	894,606	56,577
Total Cash	1,651,236	1,702,296	(51,060)



2023 RESULTS

For the year ending December 31, 2023, Peace reported total revenue of \$1.438M vs a budget of \$1.466M or off (\$27k). Total donations were \$1.241M, which were short of budget of (\$109k). This was partially offset by \$63k of favorable performance in our Endowment and LPL investment account, attributable to investment income, capital gains and change in market value of investment. Total expenses for 2023 were \$1.364M vs budget of \$1.466M or favorable \$101k. Overall Peace reported a net surplus of \$74k in 2023 vs budget of \$0. During 2023 Peace paid off the remaining balance of the mortgage which totaled \$125k, provided \$150k in cash support to various local, regional and worldwide commitments. Peace also funded \$80k towards the master facilities plan of which \$57k was disbursed in 2023. We also moved \$200k to a 12 month, high interest bearing CD.

Overall, as a result of the congregation’s ongoing support and commitment to Peace’s mission to love God, neighbor and self, we’ve continued to make a tremendous impact in the lives of those within the Peace community and beyond both financially and through the countless volunteer hours! We are truly grateful and blessed by your generosity. As we look to the future, having the bountiful support of the congregation will help to ensure that we can continue to serve in the name of the Lord. Also, as we continue to make progress on Building for the Future, this allows the next generation of Peace to continue paving the way, just as those did before them.

PEACE ENDOWMENT FUND

The Endowment Fund operates to support the mission and vision of Peace Lutheran Church. It has been in existence since 1988 and is funded by gifts from members and friends of the congregation who are interested in the long-term future. Funds given become part of the Endowment principal, and the fund is operated so that the inflation adjusted principal is maintained in perpetuity. The principal is invested, and its earnings are distributed annually to support the congregation’s mission and vision. Over the past decade, more than \$240,000 in grants have been made from the Endowment Fund. In recent years this has been primarily in areas of outreach: SET (Southeast Testament), Haitian Timoun Foundation, First English Lutheran Church, Joseph’s Coat, plus specific disaster and hunger relief efforts administered by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The fund has also provided some financial aid for students attending seminary or studying for careers in areas that are in line with the congregational mission. The amount of grants issued year to year is based on performance of the endowment fund and the number of grants requested.

Endowment Summary 2023

\$	894,606	Balance at 12/31/22
\$	60,448	Investment Income/Capital Gains
\$	22,665	Change in Market Value
\$	2,250	Donations
\$	(2,786)	Columbus Foundation Managing Fees
\$	(26,000)	Grants Paid
\$	951,183	Balance at 12/31/23