



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

2025 Continuing Council Members



Janet Wilson



Cassie Thompson



Melissa Lanoue



Molly Zmuda



Chad Melton



Lauren Ratcliffe



David Herran



Holly Cannon



CHRISTLUTHERAN
providence | south | concord | online

2025 Congregational Meeting Agenda

- ◆ Call to Order Eric Runge
- ◆ Opening Prayer Ryan Ritzmann
- ◆ Approval of 2024 Congregational Meeting Minutes Eric Runge
- ◆ Recognition of Outgoing Council Members Pastor Scott Suskovic



Eric Runge



Jessica Shurley



David Brown



Greg Twait

- ◆ Council Elections: President's Report Eric Runge
- ◆ Treasurer's Report David Brown
 - 2025 Budget Presentation David Brown
- ◆ Benevolence Amy Daniels
- ◆ Endowment Bruce Voelker
- ◆ Family Ministries Pastor Adrienne Martin
- ◆ Pastors' Report Pastor Scott Suskovic
- ◆ New Business Eric Runge
 - Sale of Christ Concord
 - Use of Proceeds
- ◆ Motion to Adjourn Eric Runge
- ◆ Closing Prayer Pastor Adrienne Martin

Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 12:10 p.m. by Jessica Shurley, Council Vice President. (Council President, Eric Runge, was not in attendance due to illness.)

Pastor Adrienne provided the opening prayer.

2023 Minutes Approval

MOTION: After review and without any questions or changes, a motion was received to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Recognition of Outgoing Council Members

Pastor Scott recognized and thanked the outgoing Council Members for their service.

Mark Ficken, Eric Trosch, LuAnn Martinson, Chad Mohn, Rebecca Schwetzer – Youth Rep

New Council Nominations

The following were recommend by Church Council to fill positions of the outgoing council members:

Chad Melton, Molly Zmuda, Lauren Ratcliffe, Holly Connon, David Herran

Ballots were distributed, collected and counted. All passed unanimously.

President's Report

In the absence of Eric Runge, Jessica asked the congregation to review the President's report, found in the annual meeting materials.

Financial Review-

David Brown

2023 revenues of \$3,448,513, \$32,949 higher than 2022.

2023 Expenses were \$3,092,981, \$28,936 under budget.

Increased revenues and below anticipated expenses resulted in a surplus of \$355,532 for 2023; surplus will be carried forward into 2024.

2023 Highlights:

- Benevolence - \$304,441
- Property expenses - \$340,079
- Debt service on the Worship Center mortgage - \$295,210
- Capital improvement projects - \$82,700

Questions on budget

Q Property Expenses increased in 2023. Is the go-forward funding appropriate to meet needs:

A Gwen and David provided context that expenses were impacted by capital project (carpet, tile, paint) that would not repeat in 2024.

Q What is the difference between Lay staff / Support staff?

A Technical difference

Q Technology budget seems low for a church of our size?

A Maintenance reserve – will fund the sound board.

Q What is in the Christ South Budget?

A Christ South Budget – maintenance of the land; utilities

MOTION: After review and addressing questions, a motion was received to approve the financial report as presented. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Benevolence - Amy Daniels

The congregation's generosity continued throughout 2023. 10% of annual budget supported a number of ministries including McClintock (McPie), the NC Synod of the ELCA and numerous others. And, in 2024, 11% of the budget has been allocated to Benevolence and Outreach.

The Benevolence and outreach teams also received support from the Endowment fund and Thrivent.

Amy highlighted a number of activities in 2023 and her written report includes more details:

A \$10,000 contribution to Hunger Fight – packaged 17,000 meals (for the local community) and provided 1,500 books for Smart Start.

Continued sponsorship of Crop Walk – helping pay for the admin fees through benevolence.

Affordable Housing subcommittee and support for Roof Above, Room in the Inn and



Meeting minutes cont.

Crisis Assistance.

Housing in Charlotte is expensive. Through benevolence funds, “stood in the gap” to provide transition help to working people who don’t earn a living wage when faced with potential eviction.

Habitat for Humanity – working on plans to partner to build a house in 2024

Freedom School

McPie is in its 16th year and was “back in business” in 2023 – with full, in-person programming. She thank her board and other representatives, including McClintock’s principal, Michael Jerrell (whose name was not included in the final version of her report.)

No questions from the congregation.

Endowment Report

In the absence of Tom Brydon, Jessica asked the congregation to review the President’s report, found in the annual meeting materials.

Family Ministry – Pastor Adrienne

Pastor Adrienne reported that Family Ministry team is now fully staffed and that she is excited about the strong team that is in place. She recognized Tyler Weller as the Youth Director, with Natalya Legvold supporting him in his new role.

Pastor Adrienne thanked the team members who continued to drive strong programs and traditions throughout the transition period. The Family Ministry team and their roles are detailed in her written Family Ministry report

The team is focused on providing a seamless connection of ministries. There is ongoing evaluation of timing for Xperience and Youth Ministry programming.

In support of the 20 youth who will attend the upcoming National Youth Gathering (summer 2024 in New Orleans), a Fat Tuesday Pancake Dinner Fundraiser will be held on February 13. All are encouraged to attend and support. Pastor Adrienne also asked that anyone interested in volunteering contact the Family Ministry team.

Pastor’s Reports Providence – Pastor Scott

2023 was a year of challenge and change, not just at Christ Lutheran, but globally – wars, world events and economic pressures.

The closing down of Christ South changed dynamics of our church. We experienced staff turnover, for a lot of reasons but we are fully staffed in 2024 – and it feels good.

The Church Council was

active beginning at the retreat in February and the identification of the Big Rocks (goals) for 2023. These goals were reviewed monthly at Council meetings.

List of the big rocks and detailed review are included in the Pastor’s Reflections in the annual meeting materials. Pastor Scott highlighted:

- ◆ Creation of the Southland Task Force – 13 people made up this blue ribbon team and have reviewed options for the last year. Jessica Shurley will provide more details later in the meeting.
- ◆ While there was passion around Thrive’s mission, there were some challenges with organization, facilities and finances. Ultimately, Thrive pulled out of Providence and Concord and went elsewhere.
- ◆ Affordable housing is a challenge in Charlotte. It’s big and complicated.
- ◆ Evangelism Strategy – this will continue to be a big rock, with the challenge that we all identify that one person to invite to church.
- ◆ We explored the possible addition of a Kindergarten class at the children’s center. This was the first item crossed off the big rock

list – the answer is no. Due to regulations and our space, it just doesn’t work for us.

- ◆ We had a concerted focus, primarily Pastor Scott and Pastor Ryan to reach out to members of the South Community.
- ◆ We opened our doors to community groups and had a home run event with Tasha Layton.
- ◆ We spent intentional time to learn from the lessons of Christ South.
- ◆ Capital Improvement Strategies allowed us to freshen up the worship center with new carpet, paint and tile.

We focused on “Christ Concord’s Success.” We had an anchor with Thrive and Willie had a strong connection with this ministry. Willie did a great job creating a strong foundation of staff and musicians. With Willie’s departure, we have decided to put together a task force made of three members of Christ Concord, representatives from the Personnel and Finance Committees, Pastor Scott and Tony Hyde. In the interim, current pastors will rotate at Concord.

Next steps – we’ll hold our Church Council retreat in the coming weeks and elect new officers. We’ll identify the Big Rocks for 2024 →



Meeting minutes cont.

Worship attendance is trending in the right direction. We are not quite at pre-pandemic levels, but seeing 17 – 20% more than last year .

No one has figured it out; need to discern what is working and Christ Lutheran is looked at as an example. The congregation continues to be bold in their support and our staff works to be fiscally responsible.

Pastor Scott's word for the year is: ANTICIPATION

Online Ministry –
Alexis Williams

Alexis reported that Christ Online continues to grow and we are seeing an average of 400 unique devices every week. This includes log in activity between Sunday and Wednesday morning.

Feedback from the online community suggests this option is valued by those who are traveling, are sick or homebound or those with small children.

If you are interested in assisting with online chat during services – reach out to Alexis.

Christ Concord –
Pastor Ryan

Pastor Ryan spent a great deal time at Christ Concord during 2023 and he acknowledged the congregation is made up of faithful, hopeful people who are very committed.

Throughout the past year, we have seen successes, including the baptism of

an adult congregant, the addition of a Sunday evening Bible Study, and fun family events (bounce houses, slip-n-slides.) – not just talking about a campus but PEOPLE

Willie had a great connection and he will be missed. He helped establish a strong foundation with the staff he hired.

The discernment team that is coming together will make recommendations and we look forward to what comes next.

NEW BUSINESS
Jessica Shurley

Jessica provided an overview of the history of the \$1.6 M purchase of the ~13 acres that comprise the Southland property as well as ministries and programs currently leveraging the property, including our Garden Ministry (40 raised beds; 2,600 pounds of donated produce) and Performance 360 Running Group (faith based running program serving at-risk Middle and High School athletes.) Other activities such as Easter Egg hunts and Oktoberfest events have also been held on the land

She then provided a comprehensive update on the work the Southland 12 -person task force has done over the past year and thanked the task force for their many hours

of visioning and diligence in this process.

Task Force Vision and Purpose

Task Force Members:
John Broughton, Gary Chesson, Phil Chubb, Paula Hoogerland, Tony Hyde, Kathy Keller, Amy Kochan, Mike Payton, Eric Runge, Jessica Shurley, Scott Suskovic, and Frank Wenz

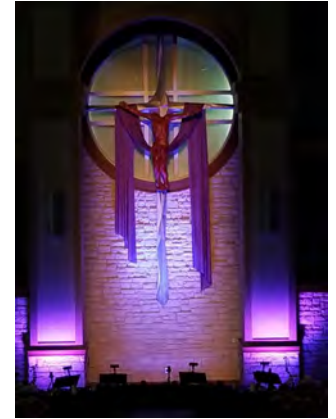
The task force initially established a vision of a successful outcome before we evaluated and discussed options. The vision is summarized in four points:

1. The selected partner has the expertise and resources needed for success.
2. Proposal will meet the needs of surrounding community.
3. Proposal will have a Word and Sacrament component.
4. Proposal will generate income for CLC.

The Process

Over the course of 8 months, the task force met to hear multiple presentations from potential partners and to discuss the merits of each proposal, perceived zoning risks, and potential reactions from the Town of Weddington to any changes to our original agreement.

The task force has considered several proposals including:



- ◆ Selling of land
- ◆ Do Nothing - Maintain and grow existing ministries
- ◆ Faith based school (K – 5th and K – 8th)
- ◆ Independent senior living facilities
- ◆ Affordable housing units
- ◆ YMCA facility
- ◆ Charlotte Eagles Soccer youth missionary program

Identified Risks and Considerations

- ◆ Any proposal other than selling the land or maintaining existing ministries requires approval from the town of Weddington.
- ◆ Identified risks which require further exploration include zoning changes, sewer capacity, and the mix of residential and commercial needs. Some of the proposals were eliminated based on

these known risks and complexity to address including independent living facilities and affordable housing units.

Recommendations and Next Steps

The Task Force recommends that CLC consider three possible options:

First is a 5-year partnership with the Charlotte Eagles Football Club to build and maintain 2-3 soccer fields on approximately 6 of the available 13 acres of the Southland property. CLC will also explore building an open pavilion for use by the community and CLC for weddings, special events, youth programs, etc.

Why Charlotte Eagles?

Formed in 1991, the Charlotte Eagles is part of the nonprofit Missionary Athletes International with a vision to generate teams of influential coaches and players who inspire people to flourish in and for Christ wherever they are planted. With teams and leagues from age 4 through pre-professional, the Charlotte Club serves over 15,000 boys and girls youth in the Charlotte community.

The Task force feels that this option best supports the vision of our charter with the least amount of risk associated with land development and the

town of Weddington. As a growth ministry, this partnership achieves the goals of meeting the needs of the surrounding community, working with a partner that has the needed expertise and resources, contains a Word and Sacrament component, and provides a revenue stream for CLC.

The proposal also allows for the continuing support of existing ministers of the Garden Ministry, Performance 360 Running, and further support of CLC and community special events.

Recommendation

- ◆ CLC to fund initial costs of removal of existing housing, land grading and creating grass fields.
- ◆ Estimated preparation costs of approximately \$800,000.

The Charlotte Eagles have proposed a \$50,000 annual lease for 3 fields for a 5-year term.

CLC will explore the costs and feasibility of building an open-air pavilion.

Second item for consideration would be to do nothing for the next year. This option allows existing ministries to continue using the land. While giving time for the City of Weddington to resolve their sewage issue which currently impacts their ability to approve any new construction projects. This option also allows for CLC to explore the costs

and feasibility of building an open-air pavilion.

The last option for the congregation to consider is selling the land. Currently estimates are between 2.2 – 2.8 million. The value could be impacted by the City of Weddington's sewage capacity issue with Union County, as potential buyers may be limited.

Next Steps

Schedule a series of Town Hall Meetings for congregational input.

Determine next steps post Town Hall meetings

OTHER NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

A question was asked about goals for attendance for next year? Pastor Scott shared that this would be a goal discussed by Council and estimated perhaps 20% year-over-year.

What is the average age of our members?

Pastor Scott indicated that a couple years ago, the median age was 36. He will research with Mary, but would estimate that this has ticked up slightly since the last review.

With no further questions, a motion to adjourn was received, seconded and unanimously passed. And adjourned at 1:20 p.m.

2024 Christ Lutheran Church Council Nominees



Andrew Brincefield

Andy and his family have been members of Christ Lutheran since 1984 and he's enjoyed growing up in the community and congregation of the church. This included as an acolyte, confirmation, and youth group in the earliest years, to being involved in CLC's sports and Sunday schools. Most recently, he served a rotation on the Personnel Committee and was its recent chair.

Andy joined Consolidated Planning in 2005, and within a few years was able to become its owner. With the help of a great leadership team and support structure at CP, the firm has expanded with offices in Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, and Tennessee.

A native Charlottean, Andy and his wife Dana live in South Charlotte with their three daughters: Abby, Emma, and Kaitlyn. Andy's parents (Lydia and

Bill) and mother-in-law are also often found on Sundays at the contemporary service.



Jeffrey Kung

Jeffrey and his wife, Karen have three children: Lisa (15),

Benjamin (12) and Jacob (6). All of them are active in many areas at Christ Lutheran. They joined CLC in 2014.

Jeffrey teaches Sunday School, coaches the 12U Boys Basketball Team and he chairs the church Finance Committee.

He is head of the Financial Institutions Group and Securitization Group at Citizens Bank. He began his banking career in 2006 with Wachovia / Wells Fargo.

Double major in electrical engineering and history at Duke University and obtained his MBA from Vanderbilt University. Jeffrey was born and raised in Austin, TX



Julie DePalma

Julie has been a member of Christ Lutheran since 2008. Originally from Georgia, she was raised in an ELCA congregation. She grew up active in her church serving in youth music ministries and as an acolyte, and some of her fondest summer memories are from Lutheridge. Julie has raised her two sons Noah

(16) and Will (13) at CLC, and both are active participants in service and youth programs. Julie has long been involved at CLC as part of the education ministry. She taught elementary Sunday school for a number of years, and for the past 3 years she has taken particular joy in serving as a small group leader for Middle School Confirmation classes.

Julie attended college and medical school in Georgia and moved to Charlotte to complete residency at Levine

2024 Christ Lutheran Church Council Nominees

Children’s Hospital. She has worked as a pediatrician with Atrium Health for over 15 years.

Outside of work she enjoys spending time with her boys, distance running, and cheering for the Georgia Bulldogs.

wife Kathy, and children Jake (28) and Maggie (24). They have been married for 30+ years and thoroughly enjoy living in Charlotte and of their commitment to Christ Lutheran.

Brad grew up in a very small Lutheran church in Illinois and has always been amazed at how Christ Lutheran, despite its size, gives him the same sense of belonging he experienced growing up.

In Atlanta, his family were members of the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer for 12 years, During that time, he worked with youth choirs and several outreach activities. Part of his church related community activities

included serving on the Board of the Atlanta Interfaith Aids Network (AIAN) as a church liaison.

Joining Christ Lutheran allowed him to continue his involvement with youth music education, teaching on Wednesday nights.

Brad is a long-time member of Spirit Song and recently served as part of the search committee to hire a new Associate Minister of Music (Phil Biedenbender).

Brad also currently serves on the Endowment Committee and looks forward to continuing that good work.



Brad Keller

Brad has been a member of Christ Lutheran since moving to Charlotte from Atlanta in 2006 with his



Our Refugee Families





2024 Financial Report & 2025 Budget



David Brown
Council Treasurer



Due to our financial position in 2024, we can carry a surplus into the 2025 year to help us meet our operating expenses.

The financial result of the past year serves as an example of God's abundant blessings.

2024 Operating Fund Performance:

2024 was a strong year for Christ Lutheran financially, our members continued to give generously, and our church staff did an excellent job of controlling expenses. Revenue increased and expenses decreased compared to 2023, and we ended the year in a similar surplus position as compared to previous years.

Our revenue increased from the previous year. In 2024, total revenues were \$3,536,628, or \$88,115 higher than 2023. Moreover, the 2024 revenues came in \$172,843 over budget.

Our 2024 budget anticipated we would be breakeven for the year. Our expenses for the year, including mortgage principal payments, totaled \$3,222,880 and were \$140,820 under budget which means we had a surplus of \$313,748 for the year.

A few key expense items in 2024 were as follows: 1) Benevolence paid from the Operating Fund totaled \$330,200, 2) Property Expenses totaled \$422,612, and 3) Debt Service on the Worship Center mortgage was \$295,210.

The total amount invested is \$2,317,102, which includes reserves for Maintenance, the Columbarium, Christ South building funds, and other operating needs.

At the end of the year, we had \$138,576 in our checking account and \$2,916 in our brokerage account that were available to meet our operating needs. The new balance on the Worship Center mortgage and Christ South land was \$3,386,568 as compared to \$3,569,449 at the end of 2023.

2025 Proposed Budget:

Like last year's budget, the projected revenue for the 2025 budget is expected to meet the projected expenses. The overall budget is up by 2% or \$53,620 as we plan for an increase in both overall revenue and overall expenses.

The 2025 budgeted revenue is \$3,417,320. This is \$119,308 lower than the actual revenue received in 2024. About \$2,405,160 or 70% of the revenue budget, is supported by pledge cards were received from the congregation. In 2024, \$2,126,705 or 63% of our revenue budget was supported by pledge cards.

The budgeted expenses for the upcoming year are also \$3,417,320. This is higher than the 2024 expense budget by 2% and 2024's actual costs by 6%, which reflects best estimates for payroll, programming, and property expenses.

Benevolence expenditures are budgeted to be \$355,725,

or 12% of our member contributions. In 2024 our actual benevolence expenditures were \$329,892, which was 11% of actual member contributions received.

Property expenses are projected to be \$405,921 which is higher than the budgeted property expenses for 2024 costs due to expected increases in utility and maintenance costs. We expect property expenses to continue to be a growing expense item in future years as the worship center ages and we will need to continue to plan to allocate budgeted funds to meet these needs.

Christ Lutheran is positioned to continue to have a solid financial future. Contributions have remained positive, despite the past years of continued disruption and uncertainty. Due to our financial position in 2024, we can carry a surplus into the 2025 year to help us meet our operating expenses. The financial result of the past year serves as an example of God's abundant blessings. As always, we are thankful to the faithfulness of the congregation in giving generously.

Peace,
David Brown
Council Treasurer

2024 Operating Fund Performance & Proposed 2025 Budget

Categories	2025 Budget	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	'25 Budget vs. '24 Actual	'25 Budget vs. '24 Budget
REVENUES					
Contributions	\$3,278,105	\$3,217,700	\$3,357,467	-2%	2%
Other income	139,215	146,000	179,161	-22%	-5%
	\$3,417,320	\$3,363,700	\$3,536,628	-3%	2%
EXPENSES					
Missions/Benevolence	\$355,725	\$314,840	\$330,200	8%	13%
Congregational Care	3,700	2,500	2,646	40%	48%
Worship and Music	35,000	33,800	33,094	6%	4%
Media and Technology	20,000	18,000	18,002	11%	11%
Welcome & Communications	31,220	26,000	24,023	30%	20%
Christ Concord	0	35,350	12,840	-100%	-100%
Christ South	24,240	28,500	20,545	18%	-15%
Fellowship	23,350	17,000	15,062	55%	37%
Adult Ministry	1,800	3,800	2,599	-31%	-53%
Family Ministry	55,000	55,500	50,063	10%	-1%
Property Expenses:					
Utilities	206,533	181,500	196,511	5%	14%
Building Maintenance	102,886	64,539	99,975	3%	59%
Insurance and Other	96,502	88,500	126,127	-23%	9%
Total Property Expenses:	405,921	334,539	422,612	-4%	21%
Administrative Expense	122,273	106,100	109,154	12%	15%
Debt Service	295,210	295,210	295,210	0%	0%
Misc Expense	22,023	17,905	18,984	16%	23%
Payroll:					
Pastors Payroll	504,102	557,534	498,836	1%	-10%
Lay Staff Payroll	399,200	392,931	391,904	2%	2%
Support Staff Payroll	1,018,719	1,024,718	883,596	15%	-1%
Other Payroll	99,837	99,473	93,509	7%	0%
Total Payroll:	2,021,858	2,074,656	1,867,846	8%	-3%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,417,320	\$3,363,700	\$3,222,880	6%	2%
Net Difference	\$0	\$0	\$313,748		

Notes:

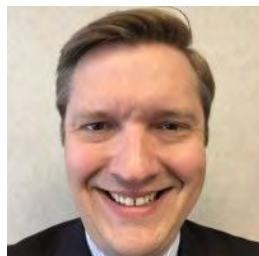
2025 Budgeted Income includes the carryover surplus from 2024 of \$313,748

2024 Actual Income includes \$355,530 carry over from 2023

2025 Payroll Budget includes the personnel committee recommendation of 3% COLA



Council President's Report



Eric Runge
Council President

Dear Christ Lutheran Church Members,

As I look back on 2024, I wish to share with you the words I spoke to our church staff at the annual Staff Appreciation Breakfast.

I told them that "I love Christ Lutheran!"

I love our facilities. I love the classrooms and kitchens and coffee area. I love Cornerstone and the Pit. I love that we have holy spaces where my family and I can worship. We are blessed with wonderful facilities, but we all know that a building is not what makes a church.

So, I told our church staff that I loved them. I love their devotion to Christ Lutheran. I love how our staff uses their talents to support so many wonderful ministries, including music ministries, family ministries, youth ministries, and countless benevolent ministries. Did you know that Christ Lutheran even has a bee-keeping ministry?

Likewise, I said I love our pastoral team. I love their commitment to our congregation. From weddings and baptisms and celebrations of life, from hospital visits and bible studies, from exploring new options to expand our church and seek new ways to minister to others-- our pastoral team pours themselves

into serving God's people. I especially love coming to worship and wondering which pastor will preach and deliver God's word in their own unique and wonderful way.

But what I really wish to convey here and now is that I love our congregation.

I love seeing all your faces on Sunday morning. I love knowing we are not a group of believers who merely worship on Sundays and then head home. Rather, our members willingly give of their time and resources and care deeply about our church.

When the church held three town hall meetings to discuss the plan for the Christ South land, the turnout was phenomenal and the feedback so valuable. Through this process, we as a church discerned that God's true plan for this land has not yet been revealed.

Just recently when we reached out to individuals to ask if they might be willing to serve on church council, we had an excess of willing and qualified candidates. Unfortunately, not all of these amazing individuals could serve at this time—but I am so thankful knowing that they are there willing to serve at a later date.

While so many churches struggle with finances and with finding volunteers, Christ Lutheran constantly meets and exceeds the mark. We as a community have so much to give. Knowing this as I contemplate our church's future, my hope and prayer is that we see our church family grow in 2025.

But to do this, we must be intentional about sharing the blessings of Christ Lutheran Church - our pastors, staff, ministries, facilities and our people -- with others. We have an amazing message of hope and salvation, and we are compelled to share this message with the world.

This year, please consider reaching out to a neighbor, co-worker or friend to join us. And like you and me, they too might also fall in love with Christ Lutheran Church.

Sincerely,

Eric Runge
Council President

...we must be intentional about sharing the blessings of Christ Lutheran-- our pastors, staff, ministries, facilities and our people -- with others. We have an amazing message of hope and salvation, and we are compelled to share this message with the world.





Pastor Scott Reflects on 2024



Scott Suskovic
Senior Pastor

*But me, I'm still here!
After 26 years, only
Amy Daniels has a
longer tenure than I.
I still feel a deep call
to Christ Lutheran. I
am energized to be
here. There is still
work to be done.*

Financially, 2024 was a boom year for America with the stock market up 24% and interest rates dropping to 4.25% with unemployment sitting at a low rate of around 4%.

Economically, America was strong in 2024.

But through other filters, there was great turmoil. Hurricane Helene came up through the Gulf and disseminated a path all the way through Western North Carolina in which entire small towns and even Asheville itself found themselves underwater. The body count, particularly in the most rural areas, is still unknown. Now months afterwards, the devastation is still widespread and many families are still displaced.

Globally, wars continue to rage. The war in Ukraine is almost two years long now while the war in Israel is coming up to a year and a half. No one sees a peace coming anytime soon for either region. The war in Israel in particular caused widespread protests and demonstrations across the country. College campuses were overrun with protesters, some hurling antisemitic slogans not heard for decades in our country.

The division in our country over the wars

extended deeply with the political race between Donald Trump and Kamala Harris that brought mudslinging to a new low.

Americans found themselves at odds with one another, causing hurtful divisions between family and friends based on how one voted. And while Trump won with a sizable electoral college victory, he received less than 2% more of the popular vote.

With his inauguration coming on January 20, it comes with excitement for some and great fear for others. In this way, we are still a divided country.

But at Christ Lutheran, we find ourselves united under the banner of RENEWAL. While we are still not yet at our pre-Covid numbers for in person attendance, in 2024, we climbed another 10%, up to 782. When you factor in weekly online worship attendance (according to the ELCA metric), we add over 700 more people, making our weekly worship attendance close to 1500.

That has also translated into giving. As you see from the financial report, giving in 2024 was outstanding, coming in at about 105% of budget. People are united in

worship and in their generosity, making Christ Lutheran a vibrant house of worship.

This year, the Council put together their "Big Rock" to remain focused throughout the year. These included:

- ◆ Southland Task Force
For about a year and a half, a task force met to discern a new vision for Southland. We looked at senior independent housing, partnering with the YMCA, affordable housing, a faith based school and a soccer field with a multi-use pavilion. When presented to the congregation via several town meetings, none of these visions were accepted, neither was selling the land. So, for the time being, we are holding onto the property, making some improvements to the Deck Barn, and awaiting a new vision in the future.
- ◆ Concord Task Force
We also had a task force to reimagine a use for Christ Concord following the closing of that campus. Our first choice was to sell the land to We Build, a non-profit in Concord that specializes in affordable housing. However, after their due diligence, they

Pastor Scott Reflects on 2024 (cont.)

could not make the land and price fit into their business model. Instead, we have a contract to sell to another church. That contract for one million dollars will be discussed at this annual meeting.

- ◆ Quarterly Congregational Fellowship Events As we continued to find ways to reconnect after Covid, we actively organized several congregational events just to gather, connect and enjoy the fellowship of one another. From Oktoberfest to Kick Off Sunday to a new Pentecost Festival; these grew in popularity.
- ◆ Continue to Enhance Online Worship This is not going away. However, I want to dispel any myths that having online worship is making people lazy and not wanting to come to church. After a couple of surveys, we have determined that our online worshippers are not lazy 45 year old parents who won't bring their children to church. They are primarily our elderly members or those who are sick that Sunday or those who are out of town and want to remain connected. This year we averaged about 387 devices per week. The ELCA multiplies that by 1.9

people per device, bringing that total to 735. Again, online worship is not going away!

As always, in a large staff of 55, there will be those coming and going. This year we said goodbye to our first IT director, Thomas Cole, who grew up in the church and served us well. He was replaced by Karl Schul, an ex-fighter pilot who later worked in the IT industry for years.

JW Ingram retired after many years, doing everything from cooking to maintenance to set up. We wish him well. His duties have been taken on by Rich Sampson and Vince Gerik.

Serving us in Family Ministry for so many years was Kate Harrison, working with our younger, preschool children. The children loved her. With her departure, we picked up Rachel Dyer as the Director for Preschool Ministries

In the music department, we said goodbye to Eric Hauck, so amazingly skilled on the piano and organ; and quickly afterwards, we said hello to Phil Biedenbener, a St. Olaf graduate (like me) with an amazing voice and a masters degree in conducting.

For the front office, following Sam Walker's resignation, we hired Jennifer Fagan and Caroline Diffley who job-share this position as receptionist, office administrator, and front office responsibilities.

With the closing of Christ Concord, we also said goodbye to Willie Pinson who served us so well at that campus. He poured in his heart and soul and voice for the people of Concord, and we thank him for his ministry.

Finally, a special shout out to Barbara West, who quietly, faithfully, and diligently worked as our housekeeper—a huge task for such a large complex. For so many years, she was a fixture in the hallways, always having time to talk. She resigned because of her health. But she will be missed, especially by all the children at our Children's Center who knew her by name.

But me, I'm still here! After 26 years, only Amy Daniels has a longer tenure than I. I still feel a deep call to Christ Lutheran. I am energized to be here. There is still work to be done. And it is my joy and great privilege to serve the saints of Christ Lutheran.

Peace,



Scott Suskovic
Senior Pastor



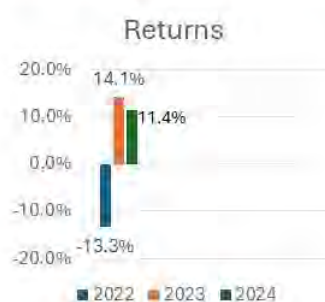
Christ Lutheran Membership 2013-2023

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Membership 1/1	2837	2832	2876	2920	3072	3006	3007	2925	2988	2932	2913
Child Baptism	42	44	31	42	45	40	32	33	47	35	32
Adult Baptism	1	2	5	2	2	4	1	0	1	3	0
Affirmation	64	23	32	64	36	39	30	4	11	8	47
Lutheran Transfer	28	42	64	108	45	58	12	9	45	24	17
Non-Lutheran Transfer	23	30	23	22	13	30	23	14	9	23	3
Statistical Change	0	0	1	5	0	11	25	3	0	0	0
Total Received	158	141	156	243	141	182	123	63	113	93	99
Death	22	13	19	9	8	15	20	14	18	21	21
Transfer	68	22	21	45	24	38	31	16	38	33	19
Statistical Change	73	62	72	75	175	128	154	8	28	68	340**
Total Removed	163	97	112	129	207	181	205	38	56	112	380
Membership 12/31	2832	2876	2920	3072	3006	3007	2925	2988	2932	2913	2632
Avg. Worship Attendance	1141	1058	1032	1067	1070	1034	1034*	481	612	716	782

* used 2019 numbers due to Covid 19 Quarantine

** 2024 statistical member data cleanup

Endowment Committee Report



2024 Contributions

✓ \$163,749

Year End Distributions

- ✓ Fund 1 Benevolence & Outreach – \$31,216
- ✓ Fund 2 Council Discretionary - \$20,797

2025 Committee Members

- Pastor Scott Suskovic
- Tom Brydon
- Rae Eagle
- Greg Hoogerland
- Rudy Heintze
- Brad Keller
- Kathryn Samuelson
- Bruce Voelker

Activities in 2024

- Ongoing review of investment strategy/allocation, performance, and investment manager
- Focus on education/awareness and resources for the congregation for estate planning
- Bi-annual recognition dinner for contributors to the Endowment and/or making legacy gift plans

Family Ministry



Adrienne Martin
Pastor, Family
Ministry

*Shepherds and
Sheep pairs
congregation
members with
students away from
home. These
anonymous
“shepherds”
send care
packages and
encouraging notes
during the year.*

This has been a great and action-packed year for Family Ministry! I am grateful to work with such a talented and dedicated team as we strive to equip families to live into the power and promise of Holy Baptism. Water with God’s promise gives us the powerful gift of new life, characterized by belovedness, forgiveness and purpose. We hope all of our ministries, from Stepping Stones to fellowship events, help support this discovery. Each team member has their special area of focus, and the beauty of our ministry is that there is a great deal of collaboration and overlap as we work toward this vision together.

From cradle to age 18, we celebrate important milestones along the faith journey. We regularly offer baptismal classes via Zoom throughout the year and Jane, our administrative assistant communicates with our families and schedules all of our baptisms. This past year, 32 children were baptized.

We are so grateful to have welcomed Rachel Dyer to the team. She started in August as our new and full-time Director for Preschool Ministry. We welcomed her as Kate Harrison, our previous Director, returned to teach in the

school system. We honor the great work Kate did for the seven years she served on the Family Ministry Team, and it was hard to say goodbye. We were so delighted to have found Rachel, and Kate was so helpful in making the transition a smooth one.

Rachel comes to us with 14 years of teaching experience and a great heart of faith. Her role is unique in that it covers a few different roles as one full-time position. She is our Director for Preschool Ministry, where she spends the majority of her attention. She manages the nursery and staffing and has some responsibilities outside of preschool that help Family Ministry programming overall. She also coordinates and plans quarterly activities for families and teaches preschool music. As we greatly value our shared ministry with the Children’s Center, she is also passionate about building our relationship with the center and expanding our ministry to those students and families.

With this much needed expansion, we have been able to add additional programming and ministry opportunities. We have increased our nursery staff support by adding two part-time people to assist on Sundays and

Wednesdays. That has been a huge help to our current and faithful nursery staff. Additionally, a major ministry we have been able to offer is Parents’ Time Out which provides time away for parents while we watch the little ones at the church. We have had two so far: one in September where we served 21 children and a second one in December in which we served 33. Both events were a blast and gave parents a chance to step away for some personal time.

Our Director of Elementary School Ministry, Kristen Rank, continues to faithfully serve our elementary school students and families. This year, she offered a new element to our Worshipping Together Stepping Stone. On the First Sunday of Advent, she and Rachel gave our second graders a tour of the sanctuary, showing them everything in the chancel area and explaining their significance. She suggested a great resource to parents about explaining the worship service.

For our elementary-aged students, our First Communion Stepping Stone is of great significance. Kristen organizes the three sessions of our preparation as well as the Seder Meal. It is a wonderful time of





instruction starting with an introduction for students and parents to the Sacrament of Holy Communion, a second session as an elaborate Story Day where we explore the Passover, and the third session is the actual baking of bread and tasting of the elements. We had 28 students undergo this instruction and take their First Communion on Maundy Thursday. It is such a special occasion!

Vacation Bible School was a blast this past summer with our underwater SCUBA theme. I am so grateful for our volunteers because that helped us expand our ministry to include 20 additional campers. In total, we had 139 campers, 35 adults volunteers and 29 middle school and high school youth volunteers. This truly is a congregational effort! Thank you for your wonderful support!

As Wednesdays Together transformed into Wednesdays Ablaze, Family Ministry revisited our offerings to introduce a Vacation Bible School-like rotation for our preschool through high school. We introduced devotional time along with music and recreation time in the gym. It has been an invigorating model for our preschool and elementary school students. For our middle and high schoolers, we adopted a similar rotation and included a weekly worship

service called Refuge. We will continue to provide programming for our middle and high school in the midst of their busy schedules. We pray that families will feel the tug of the Holy Spirit to come!

In our youth ministry programming, so much has happened this year. Tyler and Natalya have worked hard with our youth to provide faith-forming and community-building ministry. We adhere to a four-pronged approach of Worship, Outreach, Learning, and Fellowship. We have had a great year with lots of fun retreats, outings, and study. We welcomed in a new class of sixth graders with our first youth group event of Messy Games in September and have worked to regularly schedule fun outings like Light the Knights and Spare Time. Our Christmas outings also included service activities such as shopping for our McPie families.

Peer Ministry continues to be an important component in our youth ministry programming. Natalya held a retreat in the Fall to train a new cohort of peer ministers to be skilled ambassadors of Christ as they learn to listen, reflect, and care for their peers. We hope this ministry will grow because it equips our students to navigate social interactions and relationships thoughtfully and lovingly.

The culminating event for youth ministry this past

year was our trip to New Orleans for the National Youth Gathering! The support we received from our Mardi Gras fundraising effort helped us meet the budget and lower the cost for all of our students and leaders to attend. Twenty-one of our high school youth joined in with over 16,000 ELCA youth and leaders gathered in July where we attended Mass Gathering for worship and speakers, shared daily devotional time, and had fun exploring the City of New Orleans together. We were especially excited that our Xperience Band was asked to play for Region 9 Synod Day on Day 4 of the Youth Gathering, in which our high schoolers led worship for over a thousand people. They did an amazing job and it was a perfect way to conclude their summer tour. I am so proud of our youth and their enthusiasm in praising the Lord.

Our Confirmation Ministry is going strong. In August, 19 of our middle school youth and two of our high school youth affirmed their baptism. We have 30-35 students regularly attending on Sunday morning for an annually rotating curriculum of Old Testament, New Testament, and Lutheran theology. We are continually working on our Stepping Stones and Parent Connection topics so that we provide a comprehensive survey of scripture and theological tenets. I am grateful for Natalya's hard work and passion for this ministry!



Family Ministry (cont.)

Our Quillows Celebration, which happens every year at graduation, celebrated the journey and next steps of our 23 youth who participated in the Stepping Stone. We sent them forward with a blessing and a specially crafted quillow to hold onto as they entered the next step in their journey. As we hope they know they remain connected to us, Ellen Zoutewelle,

initiated a ministry called "Shepherds and Sheep" that pairs congregation members with students away from home. These anonymous "shepherds" send care packages and encouraging notes during the year. If you are interested, please contact Ellen!

There is so much more! This is a fraction of what Family Ministry does. I speak for the

team when I say that we are grateful to serve with wonderful volunteers, families, and students. We give thanks to God for the ways the Holy Spirit shows up in such surprising and love-filled ways.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Adrienne Martin

Adult Education

We are not meant to do faith alone. Christ did not intend for us to be that way. The Holy Spirit's very presence is to knit us together. This is one of the functions of the Church: to bring the people of God together (Eph 4:12). We do that en masse each Sunday but the deepest relationships happen at other times of the week. When we gather in smaller groups we are able to deepen relationships and the longer exposure allows us to truly get to know others and to be known. Sometimes the most important function of the Church isn't to see who's there, but who's missing. To be known and to be missed is to be loved. There is no hiding in smaller groups, you will be noticed because there is much love that abounds there.

100 Days of Prayer

We endeavored to be bold in 2024 and pray every day, with other Christians, for 100 days straight. Many signed up and Pastor

Adrienne, Mary Parker, and myself pulled names and assigned people into groups, as the Spirit would have it. These random groups did exactly what we prayed would happen. People who would have normally had no connection with others made deep and continued connections with each other. What's more, many many members of our church were praying for each other and the various aspects of our congregation. We were drenched in the Spirit of prayer for 100 days. I know that some of the groups are still meeting and praying. This time, even if it was imperfect, yielded fruits of the Spirit and blessing in the lives of those who joined in.

Young Adults

If you are a 20 or 30 something and haven't been to one of our events you are missing out. We have gathered regularly at homes and pubs and places to be together to share life. Some-

times what is needed is to share our lives with other Christians; to be with others who know Jesus and want to love Him and that is what we have been doing. We look forward to deepening our relationship with each and our Lord in the new year.

Out and About

Out and About is a group for those who have children. We have gotten together to let our children play and be with each other, as we sit in the shade. There are lots of fun things to do and raising kids takes a village. Fortunately Christ Lutheran is a village unto herself. More importantly as parents we are able to get together and know we have a support network. There are other families that share our values, our struggles and with whom we can share our joys.

Ryan Ritzmann,
Associate Pastor

Fellowship

The Church is full of many many traditions. From the various seasons of our liturgical year to the reflexive “and also with you” when prompted in worship. We learned how easy it is to take for granted these traditions; expecting that they should always be because they seem to have always been. We know better now. Tradition is the luxury of peace and planning and privilege. We have been blessed with much this past year, not the least of which is the continuation of some of our traditions.

Many of us have found ourselves cheering for the Charlotte Knights in section 103 of the stadium. I know my kids look forward to the game every year. Not so much to see if the Knights will win, as much as for the Dippin’ Dots and junk food.

The Oktoberfest and Trunk Or Treat was a huge event. We had so many cars and people dressing up, as well as many members coming and celebrating Reformation. This year seemed especially poignant as our favorite oompah band, Das Oompapas, was sidelined for much of their season because of the hurricane. They very much appreciated coming to our church as having an excuse to celebrate.

We added a new tradition this year as we celebrated Pentecost. The second most important holiday in our faith, and we sang songs and feasted to remember the coming of the Holy Spirit.

These events are a wonderful opportunity to not just have a good time but to meet and connect with other members of our congregation. We have

such a large congregation and it is important that we take time to connect outside of the regulars we see on Sunday.

These events are also a great way to help a friend who doesn’t have a church home find a new place to call home. “Come have a beer with me at my church” is an easy invitation and is likely to start a conversation about how Christ meets us where we are. No pretension. No need to be anything other than who you are when you come to Church.

We are blessed to be in a community that recognizes that life is a gift and there is reason to celebrate.

Thank be to God!



Ryan Ritzmann,
Associate Pastor



Ryan Ritzmann
Pastor



Benevolence and Outreach



Amy Daniels,
Director of Outreach

2024 Benevolence Committee

Kim Ciepcielinski,
Rudy Heintze,
Katherine Williams
Council Liaison:
Cassie Thompson
Staff Liaison: Amy Daniels

Outreach Staff

Amy Daniels,
Director of Outreach
Angela Davis,
Outreach Associate
Lisa Heirigs,
McPIE Programs Assistant
Sharhonda Morgan,
McPIE Community Liaison
Dee Dee Petronis
McPIE Programs Assistant
Griselda Parades
McPIE Hispanic
Community Liaison

Christ Lutheran is very generous to our NC Synod of the ELCA, our McClintock neighbors, and several key community agencies. Eleven percent or more of our annual church budget has supported these ministries this year. There was a generous transfer from the Good Soil Campaign that enabled Benevolence to grant even more dollars to local agencies. In addition, our Endowment Committee and Cornerstone Gifts distributions and Thrivent Choice Dollars always add to what is available for disbursement. Efforts such as Freedom School fundraising, McPIE General Fund donations, Alternative Gifts Market, CROP Walk, the Feed a Family Fund, grocery and clothing donations, all increase the level of our generosity as well. In addition this year we helped our members plan and execute at least 58 Thrivent Action teams which provided at least \$14,500 in funds for those projects.

This year, we expanded our focus on Refugee Resettlement and Habitat for Humanity. We now are wrapped around 3 families (2 from Afghanistan and 1 from Ukraine). The first family from Afghanistan is now a home owner!! We participated in 2 Habitat Build Days (April and August). The August day was in partnership with

Emmaus. We also completed 8 Days of Service including a great day packaging meals with Hunger Fight. We continue to support A Roof Above with a Soup Kitchen meal every month. Our ministry with Room In The Inn (through A Roof Above) continues strong for December – March each year, and we deliver clothing donations to Crisis Assistance Ministries weekly. Our Garden Ministry continues to provide tons of fresh vegetables to our community and supported Western North Carolina with several trips to take donations (especially vegetables). We also sent a group to support Faith Ministries in Mexico.

Our Quilters made and donated over 200 quilts to Lutheran World Relief. We supported Charlotte Rescue Mission with meal service volunteers for several months. Blood Drives happen with American Red Cross and One Blood quarterly. We remain one of CROP Hunger Walk's largest fund raisers and our Alternative Gift Market raised over \$8,000 through the efforts of our youth.

The agencies that received \$393,500 in grants from CLC in 2024 are listed here:

- ◆ NC Synod of ELCA \$105,000

- ◆ McClintock Partners In Education \$90,000
- ◆ Habitat For Humanity – Charlotte \$42,000
- ◆ A Roof Above \$35,000
- ◆ Crisis Assistance Ministries \$35,000
- ◆ Lutheran Disaster Response - WNC \$15,000
- ◆ Novus Way \$10,000
- ◆ Hunger Fight \$10,000
- ◆ Faith Ministries Mission Trip \$10,000
- ◆ Second Harvest \$7,500
- ◆ Charlotte Rescue Mission \$7,000
- ◆ Lutheran World Relief \$5,000
- ◆ Nourish Up \$2,500
- ◆ Salvation Army \$2,500
- ◆ Javesca Feeds \$2,500
- ◆ Lutheran Services Carolinas \$2,500
- ◆ Thompson Child & Family Focus \$2,500
- ◆ Alexander Youth Network \$2,500
- ◆ CROP Walk Administration \$2,500
- ◆ NC Synod Lifeline \$2,500
- ◆ Kairos Prison Ministry \$2,000

In addition we set aside money for community crisis rent/utilities, Room In The Inn, Violins for McClintock's Orchestra, Christmas Benevolence, and Refugee Resettlement.



Benevolence and Outreach (cont.)

Our Outreach Ministries and the projects of many groups extend the work of this congregation far beyond this giving. McPIE was very active (see separate report). We support many families at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Many small groups and classes supported these and other ministries as part of their work together. Our hope is that our financial giving supports the places where

our hearts and hands and feet are also giving through volunteer efforts and our prayers.

May God continue to work in and through us in 2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Daniels
Director of Outreach

Christ Lutheran is very generous to our NC Synod of the ELCA, our McClintock neighbors, and several key community agencies. Eleven percent or more of our annual church budget has supported these ministries this year.





McClintock Partners in Education (McPIE)



McClintock Partners In Education (McPIE)

Creating Future Stories...

Building Community...

Supporting Families...

Inspiring Volunteers...

So that all McClintock
students succeed.

McClintock Partners In Education Board of Directors

Officers:

Amy Daniels, President

Linda Cagley, V.P.

Diane Gavarkavich, V.P.

Michele Wenz, Treasurer

Rhonda Sargeant, PTO
President

David Herran,
Council Liaison

School Representatives

Michael Jerrell, Principal
Shannon Gibson, MCL2,
McPIE Liaison

Aletea Joosten, Dean of
Culture, Freedom School
Site Coordinator

Kathryn Jones, Drama
Teacher

Jennifer Parker, CMS Part-
nerships

At Large Member

Lawrence Cruciana

2024 was a great year for McClintock Partners In Education! Family Night continued with excitement! Summer was full of literacy and fun science, and as always, we continued to support McClintock staff and families!

Spring 2024 Family Night

Registration night the last week of January gave students and families an opportunity to meet club leaders and choose an activity that met the interests of each participant. We had our usual spread of middle school clubs – Art, Woodworking, Top Scot Chef, Sports Drills, Cyber Spy, and Ten80 Racing, but we also added a few new clubs this year! We were excited to gain a few new volunteers with Gardening and Robotics. We averaged over 80 middle school students each week in our evening clubs and another 10+ during the afternoon.

Younger siblings also had fun! Marsha, Amy N, Rick, and Debbie continue to dedicate their Tuesday evenings to our littlest participants. They certainly have fun “playing” during club time and also do fun activities like making treats, slime, cute gifts for the holidays, and art projects.

Adult participants had 4 class options during Spring 2024. ESL which was

heavily appreciated by many parents as McClintock’s Hispanic demographic is nearing 45%. Getting Ahead and Women’s Journey are Pathways Out of Poverty classes where parents bonded over similar situations and helped each other create a road to stability. This also gave parents opportunities to be loved on and supported by their leaders! Parent U was led by different speakers each week on a variety of topics.

Our Meals team is always ready to serve dinner with a smile! Whether it is fried chicken, lasagna, tacos, pulled chicken, salad, or the beloved desserts, students and families are always happy to receive a warm meal for dinner! Spring 2024, we served 2580 meals. An average of 215 meals per week!

Our team of School Store volunteers ensures each student is prepared for school with essential items like notebooks, ear buds, pens, sticky notes, markers and color pencils. The store items are free for students. Eric and Barb were there almost weekly to help with this effort!

Overall, our McPIE team is happy with how Spring programming went. Rebuilding takes time and a good amount of patience. However, armed with an army of dedicated volunteers, this big feat

was made small. We continued brainstorming ideas of ways to improve for the Fall semester and knew we could only continue to grow!

Summer – Science Camp, Freedom School, and more.

Over 200 students enjoyed a fun, safe, educational summer - Thank YOU!!! 70+ Scholars spent six weeks at Christ Providence developing a true love of reading and discovering “Something Inside So Strong.” While focusing on literacy, Freedom School Scholars read books that empowered them to make a difference in themselves, their families, their communities and their world. Daily reading was just a part of Freedom School. Scholars participated in many different activities around the city to gain new experiences and insight into the world all around them. Pool days at Ray’s Splash Planet and Cordelia Pool, Freedom School Olympics, Sports Connection, bowling, and lake days at the Daniels’ Lake Wylie home provided Scholars with an all-around, enriching summer! Afternoon activities such as calligraphy and flower arranging, enhanced learning! Our site even won the “most spirited” designation at Jubilee!!





McPIE (cont.)

Over at McClintock, 120+ future inventors and scientists learned science in a FUN way with hands-on STEAM activities. Whether it was discovering fossils, bouncing eggs, or creating crystals in Career Track Explorers for rising 7th and 8th graders or inventing a new game with circuits, exploring biophysics and LED's, or becoming a hydro-hero in Sixth Grade Trailblazers, students left camp with an interest in science and science related careers! Donated recyclables were transformed into cool designs and prototypes. Friday field trips to tie in all they learned included Discovery Place, UNCC, Innovation Barn, Davidson College, and Activate Games.

McPIE was also awarded scholarships to send students to Charlotte Latin sports camps, Lutheridge, Lutherock and Camp Agape. Students enjoyed learning new sports and spending time outdoors while exploring nature.

Family Support – Weekly Grocery Bags

One of the ways that we support McClintock families is by supplying needed food items for some of our most at-risk families. Grocery bags continued to be distributed weekly at McClintock Middle School to a group of families who have been identified by school counselors as most in need.

Bags are filled with canned meat, vegetables, rice/beans, spaghetti, cereal, breakfast bars, and cleaning/hygiene supplies. Bags are tailored to specific dietary restrictions, religious needs, etc. Funds for food purchases are thanks to individual donors to the Feed A Family fund, Thrivent Action Teams, and a small amount of grant funds. The Garden Ministry grew and donated thousands of pounds of fresh vegetables that were very well received and appreciated by our families. In all, over the course of 2024, McPIE averaged a weekly distribution of 36 bags of food, but the need grew to over 40 bags by the end of the year.

Teacher & Staff Support – Heat & Eat Meals, Teacher Partners, Tutors, Staff Luncheons

What started during the COVID pandemic, weekly Heat & Eat meals distributed on Thankful Thursdays at the school continue to be most appreciated and a big hit! Each meal was enough to feed 2 people. This was a win for teachers who needed to free up time to focus on teacher grading and planning at home instead of cooking dinner. Teachers wear so many hats during their workday that much of their work is taken home to their own families. Thankful Thursday meals were a way to “give

back a little time” to those whose plates were already full. Monthly during Spring, then quarterly during the Fall, 120 containers, containing 2 meals each, amounted to 1,440 meals for teachers and staff during 2024! Other teacher support included Teacher Partners (support individual teachers the full school year through prayer, small gifts, and encouragement via email or cards), Teacher Appreciation Luncheons (provided on early release days in addition to beginning and end of semesters), and Tutors (support individual students and specific teachers). These avenues of support are volunteer driven – thank you to all who support teachers!!

Fall 2024 Family Night – Continued to Grow!

Fall of 2024 saw another upswing in clubs, volunteers, and participants! Registration kicked-off in September and clubs and classes met through mid-December. The energy and excitement in the building was contagious. Families loved the support and students loved the engagement. Volunteers were thrilled to connect to students and families! After Registration Night, classes and clubs met for 10 weeks. Middle School students had some of the same clubs from Spring (Woodworking, Top Scot Chef, Sports Drills) but several more were added. Computer Building returned and met at CLC. Students assembled their own computers and learned about the parts and how they work together. Zombie Robotics changed leaders. Students built and programmed their robots to follow a path and commands.



McPIE (cont.)

Ten80 Racing is comprised of a group of students who are on the McClintock competition team where they design, build, and market their racing team. Girl Scouts was brand new for this Fall! Girls are learning a variety of skills and work toward earning their badges. Cookie season just kicked off, and they will be selling those delicious cookie varieties during Family Night! Volleyball was another new club that meets at Christ Lutheran in Spirit Hall, utilizing the courts.

Adults participated in 4 classes: Getting Ahead – a Pathways Out of Poverty class, Women’s Journey – women empowering one another, ESL – learning English language skills, and Parent U returned. McPIE partnered with CMS Family Academy for Parent U programming. This class provided resources to help families support their child’s education and engagement in school. There are 6 focus areas that were presented:

- 1. Academic Success,
- 2. Navigating CMS,

- 3. Health and Wellness,
- 4. Financial Awareness, Life and
- 5. Leadership Skills,
- 6. Technology and Cyber Safety.

Our amazing Meals Team served 2528 meals, averaging 231 meals per week. The group of dedicated check-in ladies greeted students and families with a smile each week and the School Store team was busy distributing much needed school supplies. Transportation returned with safe drivers to get students in Trailblazers, Volleyball, and Computer Building to their club destinations and drove a few participants home.

Each year, the dedication of our Family Night team of volunteers gets better and better. McPIE is blessed to have such a strong group of folks who believe in our mission and the students and families of McClintock Middle School.

Future – 2025

Spring 2025 Family Night is already in the works.

Registration begins Jan 28 and classes/clubs meet through April 29. It takes a group of dedicated volunteers to make this happen each week. From serving meals, distributing school supplies, checking-in and greeting families, to leading clubs, each volunteer is important to this program. Interested in joining our team? Contact Christ Lutheran’s Outreach office to get started! We were blessed to have several new volunteers join our team in 2024 and want to return from Spring to Fall!

Summer programming is currently being discussed. Science Camp has an opportunity to reinvent itself, which is exciting. Christ Providence will host up to 90 Freedom School Scholars. Stay tuned throughout the Spring to hear about the ways you can continue to support our summer mission.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Daniels and the McPIE team



Worship/Music/Technology

In 2024, the Music/Worship/Tech team of Christ Lutheran continued to exemplify excellence in worship leadership, serving the Kingdom as the most important thing our church exists to do. Our dedication to worship excellence, our focus of quality music-making, worship technology in not only the production of worship but also the pre-production and post-production phases, and the combination of all three areas supported a strong and vibrant ministry that worked to include all of God's children in worship, ministry, and mission.

At Christ Lutheran, worship continues to be the most important thing the Church exists to do, Word and Sacrament continues to be rightly preached and administered, and our worship continues to return to God all praise and glory, with untiring thanks for His divine providence.

In early 2024, Eric Hauck resigned as Associate Minister of Music, and we welcomed Phil Biedenbender as our new Associate Minister of Music. Phil brings a wealth of knowledge with degrees in music theory, composition, and choral conducting, as well as experience in worship leadership, education, and church work.

The Christ Choir and SpiritSong choral

ensembles continued to provide musical worship leadership at Traditional, The Bridge, and Contemporary services on a weekly basis. Over 60 individuals dedicate their time for weekly rehearsals and Sunday worship services in these ministry areas, either as a singer, instrumentalist, tech personnel, or other volunteer. It takes a lot of effort to make worship happen, and I am grateful for these individuals who make worship look and sound beautiful each and every week. I am also grateful for my collaboration with Phil, my associate, who took on a greater leadership role of Christ Choir, in addition to leading children and youth music programming during Wednesdays Ablaze. Also serving to make worship beautiful is Craig Cole, who oversees the execution of worship slides, facilitating worship participation by all who gather in our sanctuary and who worship online. Worship is also made beautiful by the hard work of our volunteer teams who serve in various capacities, from altar guild, to flower ministry, and many other areas.

The use of visual aids, specifically worship slides and videos, demonstrated the talent of Olivia Gerik, our media director, who also oversees each Sunday's video livestream of our worship services and directs camera operators.

The Xperience high school worship ministry saw a 25% growth in numbers in the spring of 2024 over the previous year. 19 high schoolers participated in this ministry program which culminated in a successful tour all the way to New Orleans, with stops along the way, with the final destination of the ELCA National Youth Gathering. At the gathering, the Xperience was honored with the opportunity to lead worship for Region Day, an event with over 1,000 youth from the Southeastern United States in attendance. Bill Porter, our technical director, along with Shelby Johns, tech operations lead, also direct the Xperience ministry and did an excellent job of growing and leading the program in addition to the many other tasks they each perform both during and in preparation for worship.

Our summer theater camp for elementary schoolers, SpotLight, took place in June with 19 children participating in a fun production of Disney's FROZEN Kids! CJ Michael and Jessica Lequire directed the production and did an excellent job. Wednesday night programming offered a variety of music options for children beginning with age 2 through high school. Attendance grew significantly in the fall of 2024 in the children's music classrooms, averaging a total of 45 children in attendance. These children and youth



Mark Johanson
Minister of Music &
Worship



Worship/Music/Technology (cont.)

presented music regularly in worship throughout the year. Mandy McAllister, CJ Michael, Rachel Dyer, Laura Tenzer, and Phil Biedenbender served in the Wednesdays Together, rebranded as Wednesdays Ablaze, program; Dennis Contreras was also instrumental in the success of several of these programs as he interfaces with a number of the different age groups on Wednesday nights, in addition to many of his other behind-the-scenes administrative duties. We also said farewell to our previous dance instructor,

Theresa Viera, and welcomed Brenna Pennacchi as our new dance instructor.

A major project which our team oversaw was the replacement of our main, front-of-house sound mixing console in the sanctuary. This project continued our team's commitment to providing quality worship and maintaining the equipment that permits us to use our sanctuary for events ranging from regular worship to large-scale concerts.

I continue to be amazed at the blessings which

God gives to us as a church as we amplify God's Word—literally and figuratively—so that it reaches the eyes and ears of those who need to receive it. It is my prayer that our work blesses the lives of those who gather for worship, who participate in ministry, and who then in turn go out into the world to tell the Good News of Jesus.

Respectfully submitted in service to God and His Kingdom,

-Mark Johanson, Minister of Music & Worship



Christ Online

Online worship has become a way of life since the pandemic, and in 2024 we kept things moving. We averaged about 145 devices watching our services live on Sunday mornings, and about 350 devices watching between Sunday morning and Tuesday evening. I heard often that people value the online worship experience most when they are sick, or when the weather is bad, or when they're traveling, and I'm so honored to still hold this position helping to shepherd this community.

Blair Barbour and I once again held down the fort in the online chat, and we've started communicating more frequently with the tech team Sunday mornings to make sure we incorporate pastoral announcements in the chat with any links or important information. 2024 also saw tremendous growth and a few extra features added to our Social Media presence as we had a 6-month partnership with Evoke to help the Communications Team learn and grow in this

area. We're excited to look to the new year and explore more ways that our online worshippers can become a more integrated part of the CLC experience, within and beyond Sunday mornings. We'd always love more help chatting on Sunday, so please feel free to reach out if you'd like to help, or if you have any other online suggestions.



**Alexis Williams,
Christ Online
Minister**

Alexis Williams,
Online Minister



How CHRIST LUTHERAN COMPARES TO THE ELCA

2024	ELCA	Christ Lutheran
Average # Baptized Members	330	2623
Confirmed Members	261	2131
Average Worship Attendance	70	782
Average Online Worship*	64	736*
Members to Worship Ratio	21%	30%
Avg. Gift per Baptized Member	\$691	\$1278.40

* ELCA metric of 1.9 X devices

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4519 Providence Road
Charlotte, NC 28226
704-366-1595
christelca.org