



2025

ANNUAL REPORT

January 25, 2026

CHRISTLUTHERAN
providence | online

2026 Continuing Council Members



Molly Zmuda



Chad Melton



Lauren Ratcliffe



David Herran



Holly Cannon



Andrew Brincefield



Julie DePalma



Jeffrey Kung



Brad Keller



2026 Congregational Meeting Agenda

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



Melissa Lanoue



Cassie Thompson



Janet Wilson



Liza Kung

- ◆ Council Elections Melissa Lanoue
- ◆ President's Report Melissa Lanoue
- ◆ Treasurer's Report David Hutchinson
 - ◇ 2025 Budget Presentation
- ◆ Endowment Bruce Voelker
- ◆ Outreach and Benevolence Angela Davis
- ◆ Family Ministries Rachel Dyer
- ◆ Welcome and Communications Pastor Ryan Ritzmann
- ◆ Pastors' Report Pastor Scott Suskovic
- ◆ New Business Melissa Lanoue
- Motion to Adjourn Melissa Lanoue
- ◆ Closing Prayer Pastor Scott Suskovic

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP YEHIEL CURRY

Dear friends in Christ,

As Lutherans, we are set free to love our neighbors and seek justice. In Colossians 2, we read: “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving” (6-7).

I am abounding in thankfulness for you, church. You are an integral part of this mission as we envision a world experiencing the difference God’s grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation. The ministries of congregations including yours, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together today and every day so more people may know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love. From providing food to people experiencing hunger, to helping train the next generation of leaders that will lead this church, your support is at work here at home and around the world.

Your generosity to each of the three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has made it possible for us to do this work

together. Your financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices are so valued.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to continue to walk in Christ, remembering you are rooted and established in faith, and free to love and serve your neighbors. Thank you, church, for the ways you connect with and support our siblings across the ELCA and in our communities.

In Christ,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yehiel Curry'.

The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”

—Colossians 2:6-7

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OPENING LITURGY

Recognizing that our faith is a living, busy, active and mighty thing, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with each of you.

And also with you.

Teach us to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Descend on our hearts, that we may love others in the ways Jesus loves us.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Empower us to be enthusiastic in pursuing your vision for our congregation.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Move us to engage issues in our community in Christlike ways, and to pursue deep and authentic relationships with those with whom we serve and partner.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Strengthen us to face the barriers we encounter in doing your work, learning to work with others amid disagreement.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Give us the ability to adapt to the cultural, economic and social changes that occur in the neighborhoods we serve.

Receive our prayer, O God.

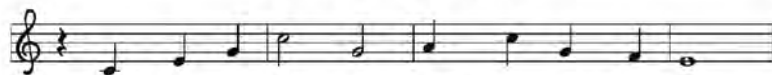
Guide us to be a healthy congregation that learns from its failures as well as its successes and offers wisdom to others.

Receive our prayer, O God.

As we strive to become the church that we proclaim to be, raise up leaders who focus on the gospel of freedom, forgiveness and reconciliation as given to us through God's indescribable act of love in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Renew us daily in our baptism, that we may discover vitality in our relationships with you, each other and those we serve in the world.

Amen.

Founded on Faith



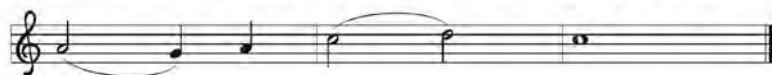
1 Found - ed on faith, the church — a - live by grace —
 2 Your cross, O Christ, re - news our life each day.
 3 E - quipped by prayer, we live the Spir - it's call.
 4 Grow - ing in grace for God's cre - at - ed earth,
 5 Found - ed on faith, called forth, em - pow'ed to serve,



pro - claims the gos - pel here and ev - 'ry place.
 Bap - tized in you, we learn and teach and pray.
 Em - pow'ed to serve with gifts, both great and small,
 we yearn for jus - tice, peace, and hu - man worth;
 we share God's end - less love with - out re - serve.



The word of God re - sounds through time and space:
 Fed by your love, with thank - ful hearts, we say:
 we bring the liv - ing hope of God to all.
 a world re - stored; a faith - ful, car - ing church.
 Then let us shout a - loud the liv - ing Word!



Al - le - lu - ia!

All Creation Sings, 1048

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 Augsburg Fortress. Reproduced by permission

THROUGH YOUR GENEROSITY, GOD IS AT WORK ACROSS THE ELCA.

MISSION SUPPORT

A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice.

ELCA WORLD HUNGER

Part of our church's long tradition of meeting human needs, ELCA World Hunger testifies to our hope for and commitment to God's promise of a time when we will hunger and thirst no more. ELCA World Hunger walks alongside communities in more than 60 countries — including the United States — to create unique solutions to hunger and poverty.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

Lutheran Disaster Response shares God's hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

WHERE NEEDED MOST

Where Needed Most supports the powerful ways we work together around the world — supporting leaders, inspiring young people, fueling ministries and championing global mission. Gifts to Where Needed Most support and sustain the people, congregations, synods and ministries working around the world to realize the hope-filled future God promises.



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Sign up to hear more stories of impact from the ELCA churchwide organization at [ELCA.org/subscribe](https://elca.org/subscribe).

Read about Mission Support and learn more at LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA.

2025 Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2025



Melissa Lanoue
Secretary

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 12:10 p.m. by Eric Runge, Council President and Pastor Ryan provided the opening prayer.

2024 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. The outgoing council members included Eric Runge, Jessica Shurley, David Brown and Greg Twait.

New Council Nominations

The following individuals were recommended by Church Council to fill positions of the outgoing council members: Andy Brincefield, Brad Keller, Jeffrey Kung and Julie DePalma. Ballots were distributed, collected, and counted.

President's Report – Eric Runge

Eric provided reflections on the past year which included gratitude for the energy and love of the

church reflected through our pastors, along with gratitude for the staff that dedicated their working lives to Christ and the church. Noting the wonderful ministries of our church, he commented on how these were possible through the support of the entire staff. Eric requested that the congregation continue to invite those who are unchurched in our network to join us and our loving congregation. He concluded with an expression of gratitude for everyone being so active, using their voice, and being a supportive congregation.

New Council Members Approved

Upon completion of the ballot count, all newly nominated council members were unanimously elected and recognized.

Financial Report - David Brown

David shared his appreciation for the generosity of the members and for the church staff for the work they do in managing the budget and doing the right things with funds given. While he noted the details of the financials were in the annual report, he highlighted the following areas:

2024 Revenues exceeded the budgeted amount and came in around \$3,500,000. This is \$172,000 more than expected. 2024 Expenses totaled approximately \$3,200,000 which was \$140,000 less than what was budgeted. With the higher-than-expected revenues and the lower-than-budgeted expenses, there was approximately \$313,000 that the team was able to roll over into the 2025 budget to help meet the budget for the coming year.

Key Expense categories that were highlighted included Total Missions which came in at \$330,000. The amount was increased by \$15,000 due to the surplus of contributions.

Property expenses were \$88,000 higher than budgeted, which was unexpected. These fees were due to increases in utilities and maintenance costs, such as completion of the flooring updates, repairs to the HVAC, and procured support from a cleaning service.

The new balance on the Worship Center and Christ South Land was \$3.3M versus \$3.5M at the end of last year. We ended with sufficient funds for handling all operating costs.

There is approximately \$2.3M in the Designated/ Reserve accounts; the largest portion is in the



Meeting minutes cont.

Christ South Land Building Fund which totals around \$1.2M. This amount includes proceeds of the land adjacent to the church. The Council Reserve is around \$284,000. Other Dedicated Funds are noted in the annual report. Those funds are invested a variety of CDs and the Money Market at an average rate 4.75%.

Proposed 2025 Budget

The current budget is around \$3.4M, which is an increase from last year by \$53,000. It is a balanced budget. 70% of the budget is supported by pledged contributions. Some of the higher elements of the budget include Benevolence, which is now back to 12% of contributions again this year. Property expenses are expected to increase to \$70,000 due to rising costs in utilities. Debt service will remain the same. This also includes a 3% cost of living adjustment for the staff. This balanced budget does include the \$313,000 rollover from 2024.

Questions on budget

Question: Is the 3% increase in salary for everyone or is there something built in for meritocracy.

Response: Everyone will be receiving the same increase given it was not a merit increase, but a

cost of living increase.

Eric thanked Tony, Gwen and David for helping with creating a balanced budget.

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

Benevolence - Amy Daniels

While we have a very generous congregation, she noted that we actually gave away more than the budget stated. Total giving over \$393,000. Additional contributions included donations for the annual Crop Walk, which was over \$47,000 and was not included in the numbers shared.

The Alternative Gift Market and McPie donations were recipients of other generous donations that were above and beyond the budgeted amount.

The benevolence team picked 6 agencies to focus on this year which included:

- ♦ The ELCA
- ♦ McPIE
- ♦ Habitat for Humanity Charlotte
- ♦ Crisis Assistance Ministries
- ♦ Roof Above

♦ Lutheran Disaster Response

There were 2 Habitat for Humanity build-days for this past year and more are planned for 2025. Please reach out if you are interested.

We have supported Lutheran Disaster Response through our gardeners' produce and through the delivery of food and other supplies after the flooding in Western North Carolina.

These are just some of the highlights from Amy's full report.

Amy also celebrated 35 years at CLC in 2024. She shared her deep appreciation for the privilege of her sabbatical which included a Civil Rights trail tour. It was so impactful that she plans to take a group in the coming year on the same civil rights trail tour; please let her know if you are interested. She shared her gratitude that God has been able to draw her into CLC's mission and passion for giving and sharing.

Endowment Report – Bruce Voelker

CLC has 2 different Endowment funds. Fund I currently has approximately \$850,000 for benevolence and outreach. Fund II can be used for Council Discretion which has over \$700,000.

This past year had a focus on fiduciary responsibility, education around estate planning, and a dinner for those who contributed to the endowment. The endowment did grow by 11.5% this year. \$162,000 came into the endowment and was distributed in the following way:

- ♦ Fund I received \$31,216
- ♦ Fund II received \$20,797.

The goal for 2025 is to continue management of the funds and increase education through the website. New members include Rudy Heintze, Greg Hoogerland, and Kathryn Samuelson. Rob Fraas will be rolling off after 3 years on the committee.

Family Ministry – Pastor Adrienne

Pastor Adrienne shared her appreciation and commented on how it was such a tremendous honor to serve as a pastor with this ministry. She shared it was an amazing year due to the support of the congregation and how grateful she is for each team member and their dedication to making great things happen.

Family Ministries put forth leadership, time and effort toward the following major experiences: →



Meeting minutes cont.

- ♦ Mardi Gras Pancake Dinner, a fundraiser to support the Xperience travels and to get the youth to the National Youth Gathering.
- ♦ National Youth Gathering
- ♦ A variety of camps for the youth
- ♦ Vacation Bible School, which was one of the three most important faith experiences. 35% of children that came were from outside the CLC community. VBS grew by 20 campers due to congregational volunteer and budget support.
- ♦ Confirmation Ministry, to help with learning the doctrines of faith, lead by Natalya Legvold with support from Tyler Weller.
- ♦ Trunk-or-Treat
- ♦ Basketball program which Chad Mohn helped get off the ground

Family ministries is fully staffed. They are working on supporting families earlier in the baptismal journey. Pastor Adrienne shared she is excited about the work of the Holy Spirit and all of the movement that is happening.

Pastor Scott's Report

This year's Stewardship Theme is *Renewal*.

Pastor Scott noted it has been a difficult time across the country with churches and denominations as they are trying to recover from Covid. Record number of pastors across the country have retired, resigned, or have gotten out of the ministry all together. The number of unchurched people is growing.

Last year there were struggles for Christ Lutheran as well. There was closing down Christ Concord which was difficult and heartbreaking but a right decision. There will be another church that will use that site for holy ministry.

We spent time brainstorming over the Christ South Land with a task force for a year and a half.

We had 7-8 options for the land that were reviewed; however, the final option did not move forward. We will continue to provide prayerful consideration for that sacred space, but it will not be dormant. The garden ministry is expanding on the land. We are investing \$60,000-\$70,000 for the deck barn so that groups can use the land; work will start in February 2025.

There is a Build-a-Bed ministry that will begin using the space to build beds three or four times a year. Mecklenburg County has a goal to build

over 100 beds per year. In summary, the land is being used, but we are still prayerfully determining where to go for the long-term use with this land.

There is *Renewal* in seeing and hearing the halls filled with kids who are eager to show their parents what they have made and learned on Sundays. We have 12-15 adult classes that are meeting and there seems to be a resurgence to get involved.

In person attendance is not back at 1100 at worship, but attendance did grow 10% last year.

With the ELCA's new metric, CLC online reflects an average of 736 participants per week. With that number plus in person attendance, there are over 1500 people on average worshipping per week.

Our congregation gave over \$300,000 more than the budget needs in 2024. There is generosity and commitment.

Church Council will have a retreat to dream about the big rocks this year and some of the areas to be considered for 2025 will be:

- ♦ Repurposing Christ South Land and to let that be a place of renewal
- ♦ Growth in Middle School and High



School involvement

- ♦ Increase worship attendance by 10-15%.
- ♦ Opportunities to serve more outside the walls of CLC by helping with Habitat Builds and the Civil Rights tour

Have more fun together in 2025.

Scott shared he feels the renewal, the passion and feeling of calm; "How good Lord to be here! The best is still yet to come." He would like to hear from the congregation about ideas in mind; he would like the congregation to share this with him.

NEW BUSINESS – Eric Runge

Eric discussed the sale of Christ Concord. The We Build contract did not move forward. We did let other organizations know it was available, and we do have another offer from another Christian church in the area. The sale price was listed at

\$1,000,000. The church plans to use the building and they do not plan to tear it down; however, they wanted \$25,000 in allowances.

We are not paying any brokerage fees or closing costs for this sale. The final price is \$975,000.

The allocation of the funds are recommended to be allocated by first tithing the amount.

\$50,000 will be given back to NC Synod, which was the seed money received for Christ Concord.

The remainder of the tithe will be split between Lutheridge, Habitat for Humanity, Lutheran World Services and Lutheran Services of the Carolinas. The remaining amount is proposed to be split 50% for debt reduction for the balloon payment and 50% toward the maintenance reserve.

Question: Does the buyer have to have financing to do the deal?

Response: They do not; they have their own financing.

Question: Does this imply they have done due diligence?

Response: Yes, they went through the process and initially wanted over \$100,000 in allowances. Tony was provided the flexibility and closed the deal. They are waiting approval to close the deal.

Comments: Glad some of the money is being given away. Concord was a gift to CLC and affected many lives. The request was for council to reconsider the reserves and give that money away too.

Response: We will have council reconsider the allocations.

Comment: Borrower is slave to the lender – Thank

council for putting money toward the debt reduction.

Question: Are we voting on the sale today and the allocation?

Response: There is one motion for the sale. Given the feedback from the congregation, council will reconsider the allocation.

MOTION: A motion was made to approve the sale of Christ Concord to the Greater Church of Charlotte for the price of \$1,000,000 less \$25,000 for the up-keep. (\$975,000). The motion was made, seconded and approved.

Eric Runge adjourned the meeting at 1:06 PM.

Closing Prayer – Pastor Adrienne

Respectfully submitted,
Melissa Lanoue,
Council Secretary

2026 Christ Lutheran Church Council Nominees



Marc Schroeder

Marc and his wife, Susan, have been members of Christ Lutheran Church since 2005, with a brief period away while living in Atlanta during 2017–2018. They have two children, Lucas (23) and Natalie (20), who were both actively involved in Christ Lutheran's youth ministry.

A son of a Lutheran pastor, Marc was raised in Texas, Michigan, and Illinois, where he developed a strong foundation of faith and service. He is a graduate of Wittenberg University, a Lutheran-affiliated college in Ohio, where he met Susan.

Professionally, Marc is a marketing executive with more than 30 years of experience in the banking and financial technology industries and currently serves as Chief Marketing Officer for a local fintech company in Charlotte.

Marc has been deeply involved in the life of Christ Lutheran for many years. He has served as a Sunday school teacher for over a decade, beginning when his son was in 2nd grade and continuing even after both children moved on to college. He is also an active participant in the Friday morning men's small group and is passionate about children's ministry and helping create a welcoming, faith-filled community for all.



Brandon Bevington

Born and raised a few miles down the road in Charlotte, Brandon is one of two sons to Maria and Doug Bevington (both are also members at CLC). After graduating from Charlotte Catholic, he attended NC State and still cheers the Pack on to this date.

Soon after graduating, Brandon married his high school sweetheart, Megan Bevington, who is an Occupational Therapist and co-owner at Happy Kids Therapy.

They have two amazing daughters, Liza & Olive, who keep them very busy and blessed. Both girls are on the u8 girls basketball team here at CLC (shout out to the Reeses)!

Brandon has worked in healthcare IT for the past 17 years. He enjoys spending time with family (likely doing something outdoors).

Megan and Brandon have been members at CLC for the past 15 years. During that time, they've grown as Christians, joined an amazing small group and have met some fantastic people. He is grateful for the opportunity to serve CLC and looks forward to joining the council.



2026 Christ Lutheran Church Council Nominees



Ashley Head

Ashley grew up at Christ Lutheran with her two siblings and her parents, John and Cheryl Plonk. They began attending when she was 4.

Ashley and her husband, Michael, have triplet 8-year old daughters: Emma, Avery and Jordan. She is a nurse practitioner by background, but is currently working as a teacher assistant at her daughters' school.

Ashley has so many fond memories of growing up at Christ Lutheran. And now teaches 2nd grade Sunday School, attends Wednesdays Ablaze, and helps with VBS.





2025 Financial Report & 2026 Budget



David Hutchinson
Council Treasurer



Through the faithful generosity of our congregation and the careful stewardship of our church leadership and staff, Christ Lutheran concluded the year in a strong financial position.

A Word of Thanksgiving

Thanks be to God for His abundant provision in 2025. As it is written in James 1:17, "Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights."

Through the faithful generosity of our congregation and the careful stewardship of our church leadership and staff, Christ Lutheran concluded the year in a strong financial position. With hearts full of gratitude, we rejoice in God's faithfulness, trusting in His promises as declared in Philippians 4:19: "And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus." We share this summary openly and joyfully, confident that as we look ahead together, the Lord will continue to guide and sustain us on our journey of faith.

2025 Financial Highlights

- ◆ Total revenue: \$3,574,345, surpassing budget by \$157,025 and up \$37,717 over 2024.
- ◆ Total expenses, including mortgage principal: \$3,289,063, \$128,257 under budget and \$66,183 over 2024.
- ◆ Year-end operating surplus: \$285,282.

- ◆ Benevolence totaled \$370,275, including \$14,550 additional due to increased giving.

The current mortgage balance was reduced by \$189,159; year-end balance: \$3,197,429.

Christ Concord was sold in April 2025 with net proceeds of \$972,475. A tithe of \$97,250 was allocated, with \$50,000 directed to the Synod and \$47,250 shared equally among Lutheridge,

Habitat for Humanity, Lutheran Services of the Carolinas, and Western North Carolina through

Lutheran Disaster Relief.

Funds were allocated for future Providence repairs following a reserve study. Fifty percent of net Concord proceeds, after tithe, along with remaining Good Soil funds, were transferred to Maintenance Reserve, resulting in a 2025 year-end balance of \$992,412. Remaining proceeds from Shelton Ln and Christ Concord were added to General Reserves, closing at \$1,210,426.

Though Christ Concord and Christ South did not ultimately continue, their proceeds now strengthen the mission at Christ Providence.

Operating cash accounts totaled \$198,935 at year-end, with restricted investments of

\$2,855,740, largely in General and Maintenance reserves.

2026 Budget Overview

The proposed 2026 budget totals \$3,435,205 in both revenue and expenses.

- ◆ 75% of contributions are pledged;
- ◆ 8.5% supported by a \$282,282 carryover; the remainder unpledged giving.
- ◆ Benevolence is budgeted at \$336,900 (11% of projected contributions net of the prior tithed carryforward).
- ◆ Property, payroll and administrative, expenses are projected to rise 1%, consistent with the projected 1% revenue growth over 2025.

Looking Ahead in Faith

Christ Lutheran begins 2026 in a strong position, thanks to God and our congregation. Your generosity is evidence of God at work among us.

We trust that God will continue to guide our congregation as we step into the future. With hope and assurance, we anticipate new opportunities to grow, serve, and deepen our relationships within our congregation and beyond.

With a grateful heart,

David Hutchinson
Council Treasurer

2025 Operating Fund Performance & Proposed 2026 Budget

				'26 Budget	'26 Budget
Categories	2026 Budget	2025 Budget	2025 Actual	vs.	vs.
				'25 Actual	'25 Budget
REVENUES					
Contributions	\$3,358,755	\$3,279,360	\$3,403,117	-1%	2%
Other income	76,450	137,960	171,228	-55%	-45%
	\$3,435,205	\$3,417,320	\$3,574,345	-4%	1%
EXPENSES					
Missions/Benevolence	\$336,900	\$355,725	\$370,275	-9%	-5%
Congregational Care	2,500	3,700	2,509	0%	-32%
Worship and Music	54,250	35,000	34,548	57%	55%
Media and Technology	25,100	20,000	16,586	51%	26%
Welcome & Communications	26,700	31,220	23,282	15%	-14%
Christ Concord	0	0	4,938	-100%	
Southland	22,600	24,240	22,506	0%	-7%
Fellowship	23,500	22,350	21,366	10%	5%
Adult Ministry	2,750	2,800	1,398	97%	-2%
Family Ministry	49,250	55,000	42,009	17%	-10%
Property Expenses:					
Utilities	210,915	206,533	200,959	5%	2%
Building Maintenance	104,765	102,886	104,840	0%	2%
Insurance and Other	96,715	96,502	95,684	1%	0%
Total Property Expenses:	412,395	405,921	401,483	3%	2%
Administrative Expense	105,020	122,273	103,352	2%	-14%
Debt Service	295,210	295,210	295,210	0%	0%
Misc Expense	24,255	22,023	23,538	3%	10%
Payroll:					
Pastors Payroll	513,515	504,102	526,235	-2%	2%
Lay Staff Payroll	396,775	399,200	402,789	-1%	-1%
Support Staff Payroll	1,041,025	1,018,719	897,268	16%	2%
Other Payroll	103,460	99,837	99,771	4%	4%
Total Payroll:	2,054,775	2,021,858	1,926,063	7%	2%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$3,435,205	\$3,417,320	\$3,289,063	4%	1%
Net Difference	\$0	\$0	\$285,282		

Notes:

2026 Budgeted Income includes the carryover surplus from 2025 of \$285,282

2025 Actual Income includes \$313,750 carry over from 2024

2026 Payroll Budget includes the personnel committee recommendation of 3.5% COLA



Council President's Report



Melissa Lanoue
Council President

I've heard it said that God brings the right people together at the right time. The collaboration I have seen throughout this year is not only exciting but simply amazing!



Blessings of 2025 – A Year of Renewal, Exploration and Gratitude

This past year was filled with an abundance of wonderful blessings! It was a year of steady renewal after the past 4 years of so many difficult decisions and challenges. I cannot begin to express the gratitude I have for the leadership of our church that helped us navigate those years. With the turning of the page in 2025, it was an exciting time to explore a new chapter! Looking back, it seemed that God granted us a time for calmness and the gift of consistency which allowed for peaceful renewal and exploration knowing that God was with us every step of the way.

Every year church council identifies “big rocks” we hope to accomplish for the year. As we reviewed and made headway on each of these this year, I also started to see us take a longer-term and more strategic outlook. Along these lines, we completed a reserve study which will help us better prepare for the costs of repairs of the church over the next number of years. We spent time researching and discussing ideas for Christ South that were brought to us by our members and leaders. While there are lots of thoughts about the land, we do not want to get

impatient. Big ideas and long-term strategies take time to unfold, plan for, and put into motion. While we may be excited about the plans and purpose that may come from the land we own, we must know that it all comes in God's time and for His purpose. With no single, clear vision emerging yet, we still continued to build out the space so that it could be enjoyed through the ministry of outreach and by the community.

We explored the growth of our church by analyzing data we received from a number of different sources. We used the gifts of some of our council members to start understanding our year-over-year growth as it relates to metrics from our members, Synod, and the growth of Charlotte. The concept is to better understand our membership and growth such that we can try to use programing to pull in more people seeking a church home and to ensure we are keeping our members engaged, connected, and spiritually fulfilled.

This year was also a time for wonderful celebrations! We celebrated the blessing of Amy Daniels and her years of service both at our church and as a leader in our community. We shared in the joy and celebration of Pastor

Adrienne and Stephen Ladd's wedding. We hosted the ordination of our bishop, and most recently, we all celebrated Pastor Scott's return. While these were only a few of the celebrations we had this year, these celebrations reinforce that growth is not only measured in numbers but in relationship, gratitude, and shared joy.

I've heard it said that God brings the right people together at the right time. The collaboration I have seen throughout this year is not only exciting but simply amazing! I personally want to thank everyone on council that has brought their love of God, this church, and our community to each and every meeting. I'd also like to take a moment to thank everyone who has served on a committee of any kind; the faithful commitment does not go unnoticed. I want to share my deep appreciation for each staff member and how they pour their time and love into our church. It's been a while since we have been fully staffed and there is a wonderful sense of calm as each ministry works to make progress to grow in mission and purpose



Council President’s Report (cont.)

together. Our staff helps make everything that we do appear effortless and seamless and most importantly, through their longevity of service, they become the welcoming face of our church and are a critical part of making us feel at home. I am also thankful for each member and their willingness to participate, contribute ideas, share of their time and wisdom to help mold our church.

I’m hoping you have felt the peacefulness and

rejuvenation during 2025 and are ready for a fresh new year of exciting possibilities together in 2026!

It has been a blessing and honor to serve as a council member for Christ Lutheran, and I thank you for the faithful support you provide to all of the leaders of our church each and every year!

In Loving and Faithful Service,

Melissa Lanoue

How CHRIST LUTHERAN COMPARES TO THE ELCA

2025	ELCA	Christ Lutheran
Average # Baptized Members	330	2598
Confirmed Members	261	2073
Average Worship Attendance	70	710
Average Online Worship*	64	716
Members to In-Person Worship Ratio	18.7%	27%
Avg. Gift per Baptized Member	\$691.41	\$1,176.65

* ELCA metric of 1.9 X devices



Pastor Scott Reflects on 2025



Scott Suskovic
Senior Pastor

*At Christ Lutheran
I can say that we have
worked hard on church
unity. I deeply believe
that we have
intentionally created
a space for all people
no matter your political
or social beliefs.*

This year I write my annual report from home during my recovery from prostate cancer surgery. With hundreds of emails, texts, phone calls and letters from this doting congregation, I feel the love, prayers and support of all of you. I am especially grateful for the incredible staff that has arisen to stand in the gap, particularly during the busy season of Advent, providing all the coverage needed.

As usual, I begin with reflecting on the state of the world in 2025. The war in Ukraine, which began in February of 2022, continues to rage on with periodic stops and starts as President Putin becomes more unpredictable and demanding in his terms for a ceasefire.

With upwards of 70,000 deaths from the war in Gaza, peace has finally come with the hostages, living and remains, being returned. The devastation in Gaza is unbelievable with the world torn between agreeing that Israel can defend itself while arguing about the widespread civilian casualties. Will there ever be peace in Israel?

Also internationally, Pope Leo became the first American Pope, hailing from Chicago. Or, as they

like to say in the Windy City, "Da Pope!" Interesting name, since "Leo" was the name of the Pope during the split with the Protestant Reformation.

Nationally, with President Trump taking office in January to start his second term, the political divide in our country has widened. He asked Elon Musk to create DOGE to eliminate government waste with a collective uproar from cabinet budgets to subsidies to USAID. Everyone wants to end the waste, just not within their budget.

President Trump has also started many tariff battles around the world, arguing for a more level economic playing field. He was a key player in the ceasefire in Israel, hailed as a hero in that country, but not with the Nobel Peace Prize Committee. At President Trump's urging, interest rates have come down three times this year which has spurred the markets to end the year at an all time high. And as promised on the campaign trail, he intensified the fight against illegal immigration by closing the borders and sending ICE and Border agents to cities across the United States, including Charlotte, causing great division and

protests. We want to be a nation of laws, but how do we do that with the biblical mandate to care for the widow, orphan and strangers among us?

But at Christ Lutheran I can say that we have worked hard on church unity. I deeply believe that we have intentionally created a space for all people no matter your political or social beliefs. While I'm sure there are those who would like me to be vocal from the pulpit to espouse my comments on the latest new cycle, instead, as Paul said, "We preach Christ crucified" to encourage people with the sure and certain hope of the resurrection.

As a result, I believe we have seen this unity play out in so many ways at Christ Lutheran. First, with each of our 3-4 New Member Classes per year, we see about 30-35 people joining each time, mostly younger families looking for a place to grow in their faith. Interestingly, we have seen a bigger increase in Traditional worship.

Second, our unity is also found in our giving. While perhaps a crass way to measure unity, Jesus did say something about where our hearts are, there our treasures will be found, also. People give to what they believe is a

strong mission that makes a deep impact in themselves and the world, and I believe Christ Lutheran does just that.

But this church unity also has experienced change. We continue to discern God's vision for Southland. Our latest attempt was to develop smaller cottage homes for a 55+ community of about 40 homes with some amenities. But once again, Weddington would not allow anything less than an acre per lot. Back to the visioning board.

Thankfully, Southland has not remained dormant. We have a Garden Ministry that literally produces two tons of food a year. A bee ministry that had its first harvest. A running club with a faith-filled coach. We renovated the Deck Barn so that small groups can have programs and fellowship on the land. And I am very excited about a new ministry called Sleep in Heavenly Peace in which we renovated one of the large garages into a wood working shop to build beds. So far, we have had three builds, for a total of about 80 beds, and are in the process of distributing them to kids in our community, particularly around McClintock School. Our motto is, "No kids sleep on the floor in our town!"

For staffing, we have also experienced some changes. The most significant one was

after 36 years, we celebrated the ministry of Amy Daniels, so thankful for the impact that she made over three decades! Close behind Amy was Jane Satterfield with over 20 years with the Family Ministry Team. Sadly, we also said goodbye to Bill Porter who took his dream job as a camp director near Hendersonville and Marsha Vorhees after serving in the nursery for many, many years. We also said goodbye to Richard Samson who helped with facilities, Laura Tenzer who helped with the music ministry, particularly with the Bridge Service, and Jennifer Fagan who was one of our front office managers.

But, 2025 also brought with it some vibrant new staff members that have quickly become a part of this dynamic team. Emily Arthur is one of our front office managers who greets people warmly on the phone and at the front door. Sarah Diffley and Ja'Niyah Hall took on the nursery roles. Ethan Dyer picked up a part time role with our bells. As Shelby John moved into Bill Porter's role as tech director, we replaced her associate role with Kevin Lane. And finally, Jennifer Youse joined us part time working with the children at Wednesdays Ablaze.

We also experienced some deaths that left a deep impact on our community. **Pastor David Misenheimer**, who served as senior pastor of Christ Lutheran from 1983 to 1996, died on November 18, 2025. From contemporary worship to the establishment of the Children's Center, he made a lasting impression on our ministry. **Barbara West**, who served us so well for many years in housekeeping, died of pancreatic cancer on January 8, 2025.

While turmoil continues around the world, we have found the peace that passes all human understanding here at Christ Lutheran. As Peter said on the Mount of Transfiguration, "How good, Lord, to be here!"

I am healing up well from my surgery on November 24. It just takes time and I'm allowing my body to heal. I look forward to returning to the office mid-January, again, very grateful for the council for allowing this time off to heal and for a staff who has kept everything going so smoothly.

Blessed Beyond Measure,



Scott Suskovic
Senior Pastor



Christ Lutheran Membership 2015-2025

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Membership 1/1	2876	2920	3072	3006	3007	2925	2988	2932	2913	2632
Child Baptism	31	42	45	40	32	33	47	35	32	38
Adult Baptism	5	2	2	4	1	0	1	3	0	2
Affirmation	32	64	36	39	30	4	11	8	47	42
Lutheran Transfer	64	108	45	58	12	9	45	24	17	9
Non-Lutheran Transfer	23	22	13	30	23	14	9	23	3	7
Statistical Change	1	5	0	11	25	3	0	0	0	20
Total Received	156	243	141	182	123	63	113	93	99	118
Death	19	9	8	15	20	14	18	21	21	13
Transfer	21	45	24	38	31	16	38	33	19	24
Statistical Change	72	75	175	128	154	8	28	68	340	115
Total Removed	112	129	207	181	205	38	56	112	380	152
Membership 12/31	2920	3072	3006	3007	2925	2988	2932	2913	2632	2598
Avg. Worship Attendance	1032	1067	1070	1034	1034*	481	612	716	782	710

* used 2019 numbers due to Covid
19 Quarantine

Endowment Fund Committee

	Fund I	Fund II
Balance	\$ 933,084	\$ 793,759
CY 2025 Return	15.2%	15.2%
2025 Distributions	\$ 34,110	\$ 26,774



2026 Committee

Bruce Voelker, Chair

Rae Eagle

Rudy Heintze

Greg Hoogerland

Brad Keller

Kathryn Samuelson

Pastor Scott Suskovic

- ◆ Fund I Distribution provided to Benevolence Committee
- ◆ Fund II Distribution provided to Church Council for use at their discretion

2025 Activity

- ◆ Ongoing oversight of investment strategy
- ◆ Ongoing oversight of 3rd party investment advisor (Steward Partners)
- ◆ Updates to Endowment Bylaws and Investment Policy Statement to:
 - ◇ Bring Consistency to the Bylaws by consolidating to one set for both funds
 - ◇ Provide additional flexibility in key areas (e.g., size of committee, distribution rates, etc.)
 - ◇ Separate IPS from Bylaws for clarity
 - ◇ Initial planning for website updates to increase educational awareness materials for the congregation

Family Ministry



Adrienne Ladd
Pastor, Family
Ministry

*We appreciate all
of the love the
congregation pours
into our children and
families through the
Family Ministry
Team and
directly.*

Thanks be to God for another great year in Family Ministry! I am privileged to work with an amazing team of gifted and passionate individuals who have a heart for Christ and great skill in equipping families in the life of faith. In all of the wins and successes this year, I give thanks for this team, and I give glory to God! We continue to strive to best serve our children, youth, and families to fulfill their baptismal promises and grow as disciples of Jesus.

Our ministry is reflective of our congregation's strong faith and generosity. As we just celebrated in our Anniversary of Baptism Sunday earlier this month, we blessed and gifted all of those who were baptized this year with a gift coming from the congregation: a candle holder to light their baptismal candle. Having the candle holder frees our hands so that we are the hands and feet of Christ, giving glory to our Father in heaven so that He may see our good works and give glory to our Father in heaven.

Baptism is our first official Stepping Stone in the Stepping Stones Ministry Pathway. It is hugely significant in a child's life and in our congregational life. Each year, we baptize 40-50 little ones. This past year, we also

celebrated with five teenagers who were brought into the Body of Christ through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. That is awesome!

In 2025, we held our first annual Baptismal Brunch to accompany the important Stepping Stone, Anniversary of Baptism. Along with the celebration, Rachel, our Director for Preschool Ministry, and I shared research and practical guidance for new parents in building faith practices such as prayer, singing, and Bible Stories with their infants and toddlers. We had a room full of families and received good feedback for sharing even more practical guidance.

Much of our baptismal process, including the online class, communication, and scheduling is administrative. That's true for much of Family Ministry. Every event requires various levels of administration, including registrations, communication, and resource support. We have been grateful to bring on Caroline Diffley as our Administrative Assistant for Family Ministry. She has a love for Family Ministry and has already been leveling up our celebration and events. She has been learning the job and has come onto the team officially this year.

Rachel was on maternity leave last Fall. She gave birth to a beautiful baby boy, Owen Reid. She returned from leave this January. We are so glad to have her back!

We are grateful to have a full team running on all cylinders. I will outline a few highlights from each ministry area.

Nursery and Preschool

We care for our littlest ones. In the nursery, we are incorporating faith-based content and story into Sunday mornings. Marsha Voorhees, our very appreciated and faithful lead nursery staff person, retired this year. We celebrated her retirement in December and gave thanks for her dedication and the beautiful ways she impacted so many.

Dawn Wisenberger has stepped into that role as our main nursery staff person. We appreciate her and all of our adult, college, and high school staff. We also welcome parental involvement and help in the nursery!

We have strong class attendance for preschool both on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings. Along with our second graders and sixth graders receiving their developmentally appropriate Bibles, we gift our three-year-olds with Spark Bibles. Rachel has added a Prayer Scrapbooking





event with the Stepping Stone to help our little ones and parents pray together every day. It is beautiful to see our families working together talking about all of the pictures and people for whom to pray!

Rachel and Kristen held quarterly Parent's Time Out events. These were fun, activity-filled events so parents could go out for errands, on a date, or just have time at home! Stay tuned for more!

We continue to grow our relationship with the Children's Center. This is a valuable relationship and ministry partnership. We hold chapel every Thursday. Rachel and Phil lead music and the lesson, and a pastor leads the story. It is a fun time to get to know our CLCC students. We like to be involved with the Children's Center's events like the Fall Festival, Spring Fling, Christmas Program, and Graduation. These relationships are so important!

Elementary

There is a great deal of overlap between preschool and elementary school ministry. Kristen and Rachel are often working together on shared events and ministries such as ChristKids TV and in-person Wednesdays Ablaze programming, Parents Time Out, Stepping Stones, and Vacation Bible School. These are important ministries, and it is a

joy to interact with our elementary school students who are engaged and curious in their faith journey.

Kristen is skilled in planning Vacation Bible School. This is one of our bigger outreach ministries. Last summer, our theme was "True North", and we decked out the sanctuary, classrooms, and Lower Commons with the great outdoors! We strive to continue to grow this ministry and appreciate the gift of being able to offer it at no cost.

We give Bibles to our second graders at the Worshipping Together Stepping Stone in the September. We added an educational component to it in December, where parents and students walked together through the sanctuary and learned the different symbols, elements, and spaces. They got to see the altar, choir lofts, font, and the organ to learn about all the parts of worship.

We also added a Family Advent Wreath Making Event before the first Sunday of Advent. It was an awesome event and families got to make memories and wreaths together. We had pizza and then dove into learning about wreaths and the Season of Advent. It was a lot of fun!

We held our First Communion Stepping Stone for second graders and their families. It was an instructive three sessions that concluded

with the Seder Meal and Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday.

Confirmation

Confirmation is a well-developed and engaging ministry. We have a strong group of sixth, seventh, and eighth graders who attend Sunday School. This year we have studied and learned Lutheran theology. We offered formation Stepping Stones including The Lord's Prayer, Apostles' Creed, and the Ten Commandments. Natalya Legvold is our confirmation guru and keeps Sunday mornings running!

Youth Ministry

We have active and engaged youth! Tyler and Natalya were intentional to keep a balanced ministry in the way of the WOLF: Worship, Outreach, Leadership, and Fellowship. Very notably, our high school Sunday School class grew from a few students to over 20 on average each Sunday. It is awesome to see The Pit full of high schoolers who are growing in understanding and expressing their faith! They meet in a large group for an introduction and then go into small groups for discussion.

A big emphasis for high school was to highlight and grow all of the high school youth ministry events. We value Xperience as an important youth ministry, and continue to strive to communicate our many high school youth events including Peer Ministry



Family Ministry (cont.)

Training, outings, mission trips and Teens
Encountering Christ.

This year, our high school students went on a mission trip to Western North Carolina, where they volunteered with FOSCO to help with recovery after Hurricane Helene. This food pantry provided necessities to those in the mountains who were still without the basics, including food and water. Our high schoolers loved it so much, we are going back in February!

Worship

Our ministry includes a lot of teaching, event planning, and games. However, worship is a big part of that. Every Sunday, we offer ChristKids for an engaging way to experience the Bible and stories of scripture.

Our Children's Christmas Eve Service and Children's Good Friday Service are also ways we continue to share the story of God's love in Jesus Christ in developmentally appropriate and engaging ways.

Looking Ahead

Family Ministry continues to grow in our effort to equip families to live into their baptismal promises. Our focus for 2026 is to develop an emphasis that helps families follow Jesus together. We hope to grow into this family discipleship focus and appreciate your prayers.

For our youth ministry, we are preparing for some new summer opportunities. All rising seventh graders through high schoolers are invited to attend the Gathering Camp this summer at Lutheridge. It is a pre-Gathering event that is

offered to help our students get the most out of the Gathering, which will be next summer (2027), and to develop relationships with other young people of faith. We are church together!

Thank you

This report is just the tip of the iceberg for all that goes on in Family Ministry. A written report simply cannot cover it all! This ministry is one of faithfulness. A lot of teaching and formation goes on during the year and we especially want to thank all of our volunteers who are so wonderful and faithful. We appreciate all of the love the congregation pours into our children and families through the Family Ministry Team and directly.

In Christ,
Adrienne Ladd
Associate Pastor

Discipleship

After Jesus ascended into heaven, and after the Holy Spirit came to the Christians who were still wondering "what now," they got together. Sometimes they hid behind doors because they were scared of the authorities. Sometimes they were bold and preached in the temple (Acts 4). These early Christians kind of didn't know what to do. They didn't have all the wisdom and experience of a couple millennia, like we do. So, they did what they could: they got together. They met in each other's homes, be-

cause they didn't have a church building. They met and studied the teaching of the apostles, and all those who witnessed Jesus. They got together just to be together, because they knew that if they weren't with other Christians they would get washed out by the culture, a wisdom gained from their Jewish ancestors who were forced into exile in Babylon.

This practice of getting together into small groups and furthering our spiritual journey by studying the Word,

fellowshipping and praying still happens today. There are many groups that meet in our congregation today. We, the Church, know that this is a powerful way to move us to being the disciples Christ has called us to be. If you are in a group, or a Sunday School class you know. We at Christ endeavor to form, reform, and inform groups to perpetuate the mission: make disciples of all the world. The Young Adult group is ever-growing and meeting regularly. We are calling the men of our

congregation into groups with Brothers in Faith. We had another training session for group leaders who take the niche they find themselves in and open up that stage of life or particular interest for others to join-in with them and further their spiritual journey together.

If you are in a group, or looking to start one, we have a resource that you may not be aware of in our

Online Study Guide. (<https://christelca.org/online-study-guide/>) You can find a link to it in the Resource section of our website. It is a tool to help those leaders who don't know what to do next, or maybe haven't had time to prepare anything. You can hop on to the page and find a topic from a sermon series and dive right in: Watch the sermon and discuss what

you heard. It is the very basis of what those early disciples did so long ago. Our hope is that in practicing our faith we can better understand the Word of God in our lives, and help bring that gift to others, by sharing our lives and knowledge.

Ryan Ritzmann,
Associate Pastor



Ryan Ritzmann
Associate Pastor

Fellowship

Fellowship is a vital part of our spiritual journey; it's not optional. Getting together and being Christian together is the work of the Holy Spirit. We can confuse fellowship as an attraction, like a carnival. Maybe we want to go, maybe we don't, but that's not our goal. Our Goal is to be together, to grow together and to discern the Holy Spirit and what He's doing, so we can follow His lead. To that end we have continued our big events, creating the rhythms of seasons. Kick-Off Sunday starts the school year, and gets us back into the groove. Soon after is Oktoberfest, which has quickly become a loved favorite. More than beer, brats and good music, it is a time to invite the neighborhood and connect with those whom

we see every Sunday but haven't had the chance to really meet. Pentecost finishes our big celebrations. It is the second most important holiday in our faith (the coming of the Holy Spirit), and without the tradition of an Easter or Christmas, we are creating our own.

There have been some big wins for us as well as we reach beyond our walls. We hosted Seph Schlueter and filled the house, the majority of whom were not members, but guests. As well as smaller wins like the Chili Cook-Off, Christmas Cookie Exchange, Potluck Mash-up Mixer, Men's Group Oyster Roast, and families with young children getting Out-and-About. These smaller events are fabulous ways of growing

together as our Lord intended. Hopefully you found a chance to find your place.

There will be many other chances to develop our connection to each other in the coming year. If you don't know where to plug in, your first will be the Remember event on February 1.

Our next big event is Broadway Blockbusters, where we host Broadway musicians in our Church and welcome our neighbors in.

Invite a friend and invite the Holy Spirit to move in your relationships.

Ryan Ritzmann,
Associate Pastor

There will be many other chances to develop our connection to each other in the coming year. If you don't know where to plug in, your first will be the Re-membering event on February 1.

Benevolence and Outreach



Angela Davis,
Director of Outreach

2025 Benevolence Committee

Rudy Heintze,
Katherine Williams
Kim Kirven
Council Liaison:
Janet Wilson
Staff Liaison: Angela Davis

Outreach Staff

Angela Davis,
Director of Outreach

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. In 2025, 12% of our annual church budget supported multiple ministries and non-profits in 2025. Endowment Committee, Cornerstone Gifts distributions and Thrivent Choice Dollars add to what is available for disbursement. Efforts such as Freedom School fundraising, McPIE General Fund donations, Alternative Gifts Market, CROP Walk fundraising, the Feed a Family Fund, and grocery and clothing donations, all increase the level of our generosity as well. In addition, this year we helped 36 Thrivent members plan and execute 52 Thrivent Action teams, which provided \$13,000 in funds for CLC Outreach projects. Several other CLC members also acquired Thrivent Action teams for projects of their choosing, resulting in an additional \$1,500 in funds for community projects.

This year, we expanded our focus with churchwide support for Habitat for Humanity. We participated in several Habitat builds in April and May. In July, a congregational event was held to kick-off a lofty Habitat fundraising goal (\$100K) to support a build of our own in the new Hope Springs neighborhood. From July to November (12

total build days), 40+ volunteers helped construct a home for a family in need of shelter! To facilitate this, our congregation raised almost \$60K to make this dream happen, and with the help of benevolence funds, the full \$100K was fulfilled!

Christ Lutheran continues to wrap around two refugee families – the Hnatenko and Osmani families. Both families are doing great and are supported by a dedicated group of volunteers.

Our annual 8 Days of Service included a great day packaging over 25,000 meals with Hunger Fight. We continue to support Roof Above with a Soup Kitchen meal every month. Our ministry with Room In the Inn (through 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 (3,955 lbs. in 2025) and supported our Feed a Family ministry to supply McClintock families with fresh produce. Our Quilters made a total of 213 quilts benefiting Lutheran World relief, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, Women in Transition, Javesca Feeds, and others. 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 raiser and our Alternative Gifts Market raised over \$10,000 through the efforts of our youth!

During times when communities and families were facing major food insecurities with SNAP and other benefits being paused, benevolence upped the grants to important agencies such as Nourish Up and Second Harvest. New this year is support for mental health awareness through NAMI – the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

Funds for community crisis rent/utilities, Room In The Inn, Christmas Benevolence, and Refugee Resettlement are also set aside.

The agencies that received \$404,136 in grants from CLC in 2025 are listed here:

- ◆ NC Synod of ELCA \$110,000
- ◆ McClintock Partners In Education \$90,000
- ◆ Habitat for Humanity – Charlotte \$40,070
- ◆ Roof Above \$35,000
- ◆ Crisis Assistance Ministries \$35,000
- ◆ Novus Way \$10,000
- ◆ Hunger Fight \$10,000



Benevolence and Outreach (cont.)

- ◆ Second Harvest \$7,500
- ◆ Charlotte Rescue Mission \$3,000
- ◆ Lutheran World Relief \$5,000
- ◆ Nourish Up \$7,500
- ◆ CROP Walk Administration \$2,500
- ◆ NC Synod Lifeline \$2,500
- ◆ Kairos Prison Ministry \$4,000
- ◆ The Dwelling \$3,600
- ◆ National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) \$7,500
- ◆ Christmas Sponsorships \$6,500
- ◆ Room in the Inn \$2,000
- ◆ Charlotte Community Outreach Crisis \$22,470

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 2026.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Davis
Director of Outreach

Our annual 8 Days of Service included a great day packaging over 25,000 meals with Hunger Fight. We continue to support Roof Above with a Soup Kitchen meal every month.





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:

Lawrence Cruciana, President

Linda Cagley,
Vice President for Funding and
Partnerships

Diane Gavarkavich,
Vice President, Programming

Michael Wenz, Treasurer

Nikki Prenoveau,
PTO President

Julie DePalma,
Church Council Liaison

School Representatives

James Jerrell, Principal

Shannon Gibson,
Administrator & McPIE Liaison

Aletea Joosten,
McClintock Teacher

Kathryn Jones,
McClintock Teacher

At-Large Representatives

Lola Ochoa, Parent

Kelli Cook, Parent

Tahira McCoy, Parent

Dana Hutchinson,
church member

Jennifer Parker,
community member

Casey D'Alessandro,
community member

McPIE Family Night, Science Camp, Freedom School, Daytime Opportunities, Feed-a- Family, and More!

2025 was a remarkable year for McClintock Partners In Education! Family Night continued its steady growth with more students, more volunteers, additional clubs, and more meals served than ever before. Summer was filled with literacy, STEM exploration, and enrichment opportunities, and McPIE continued to be a reliable support system for both McClintock families and staff. We also secured several new partnerships and celebrated the acquisition of a shared van that is already transforming access for families. God continues to open doors for this ministry, and all glory is His.

Spring 2025 Family Night

Registration night in late January created a joyful moment of community as students and parents met club leaders and selected activities based on interests and strengths. Middle school offerings included Art, Woodworking, Cyber Spy, Sports Drills, Top Scot Chef, and Ten80 Racing, along with several new clubs added in response to student input. Across the spring, more than 65 middle school students participated in evening clubs weekly, with an

additional 15+ involved in afternoon programming. Families were served an average of 165 meals each Tuesday night and enjoyed the fellowship that naturally grows around shared tables.

Younger siblings were not left out—leaders dedicated their Tuesday evenings to creating meaningful experiences for our littlest participants. These students enjoyed age-appropriate play mixed with projects such as holiday crafts, slime, edible treats, and gift-making. Parents consistently report that younger siblings look forward to Tuesday nights with the same enthusiasm as the middle school participants!

Parents also had opportunities to learn and grow. Four adult class options were offered: ESL (which has become increasingly valued as McClintock's Hispanic demographic nears 45%), Getting Ahead, and Women's Journey—both part of the nationally recognized Pathways Out of Poverty framework. These courses helped parents build relationships, share experiences, and design realistic paths toward stability. Participants were encouraged, prayed for, and deeply supported by class leaders and peer friendships.

Our Meals Team served 1,972 high-quality dinners during the spring semester, including

lasagna, tacos, pulled chicken, salads, fried chicken, and a rotation of desserts—each shared with a smile and genuine hospitality. Many families commented that having a hot meal together mid-week eased financial strain, reduced stress, and created a rhythm of peace in their household.

The School Store continued to eliminate educational barriers by providing students with free essential supplies including notebooks, earbuds, pens, highlighters, sticky notes, markers, and colored pencils. Volunteers such as Eric and Barb visited nearly every week to ensure students had what they needed for academic success.

Summer 2025: Freedom School, Science Camp & Overnight Camps

More than 150 students experienced safe, purposeful, and educational summer programming—thanks to the generosity of donors, volunteers, and ministry partners!

Freedom School served 80 Scholars who strengthened their love of reading, increased comprehension skills, and explored identity, service, and citizenship. Scholars discovered how they can make a difference in their families, communities, country, and the world. Ms. Joosten and the





McPIE (cont.)

Servant Leader Interns were exceptional guides throughout the summer, building relationships grounded in dignity and genuine care.

Field trips exposed Scholars to a world beyond the classroom, including the Schiele Museum, Charlotte Motor Speedway, Kate's Skates, and M&F Bank, where students learned about financial literacy and careers in banking. Lake Day at the Daniels residence was once again a highlight of the summer—students swam, laughed, and built memories with peers and mentors.

Level 1s and 2s participated in the citywide Field Day and took **first place!** At the Finale, students showcased spoken word, music, dance, skits, and Harambee cheers, closing with the theme song Something Inside So Strong, a powerful moment for families, donors, and volunteers who witnessed the transformation a literacy-rich summer can provide.

Science Camp

Science Camp fostered curiosity and confidence for more than 60 future scientists and engineers. Campers explored forensics, biology, chemistry, innovation and design, art, math, and mindfulness through hands-on, inquiry-based learning. Visits to UNC Charlotte and Activate Games allowed students to imagine themselves on a college campus and work as a team in real-world STEM challenges.

Post-camp surveys demonstrated measurable outcomes:

- ◆ **88%** reported they understood science better.
- ◆ **78%** felt more confident in their ability to learn science concepts.
- ◆ Many expressed interest in STEM-related careers.

These results reflect research showing that early exposure to STEM improves academic persistence and long-term opportunities—outcomes valued by both educators and funders.

Overnight Camps & Scholarships

McClintock students also explored the North Carolina mountains through overnight camps at Lutheridge and Lutherock, where 16 campers spent a week enjoying themes such as High in the Sky, Hammock Hangout, Fire & Water, Cave N Wave, and Blueridge Expeditions. Three students attended the Night Owls program at Camp Agapé. Charlotte Latin School once again provided scholarships for baseball and girls basketball, expanding access for student-athletes.

Family Support: Weekly Grocery Bags

Family support is a core expression of McPIE's mission. Each week, grocery bags were

distributed to families identified by McClintock counselors as most in need. These bags included canned meats, vegetables, rice/beans, spaghetti, cereal, breakfast bars, and household hygiene items—customized for dietary and cultural needs whenever possible.

Funding came through individual donors to the Feed-a-Family fund, Thrivent Action Teams, and small grants. The Garden Ministry contributed **thousands of pounds of fresh vegetables** during the summer and fall, which families received with gratitude. McPIE averaged 31 bags per week during 2025, rising to 40 by December as food prices increased and government benefits fluctuated. To expand support in 2026, families will be transported to a partner food bank at month-end to stretch groceries further and uphold dignity of choice.

Teacher & Staff Support

McPIE also supported McClintock's teachers and staff, who continue to carry heavy classroom and administrative responsibilities. Heat & Eat meals distributed on Thankful Thursdays fed up to two people per container and gave educators valuable time back for planning, grading, and rest. Quarterly distributions totaled **960 meals** during 2025.

Teacher Partners encouraged educators with prayer, cards, notes, and small gifts throughout the year—reminding teachers they are seen and appreciated. Teacher Appreciation Luncheons were provided during early release days and semester transitions. Tutors supported



McPIE (cont.)

targeted students and specific teachers in academic areas where extra help was needed. These ministries are volunteer-driven and represent direct investment in school culture and retention.

Fall 2025 Family Night

Fall 2025 saw another surge in participation, energy, and volunteerism! Clubs met for eight weeks after Registration Night and included returning favorites alongside exciting additions such as Volleyball, Computer Building, Girl Scouts, and expanded Ten80 Racing. Six Computer Building students spent the semester assembling their own PCs, learning components and system function, and proudly taking their computers home. Asphalt Motorsports, McClintock's Ten80 team, earned a spot at the National Competition in April 2026.

Adult education offerings included Getting Ahead, Women's Journey, and ESL. The Meals Team served **1,563 meals** in the fall (averaging 174 weekly), and School Store volunteers were busy supplying notebooks, art supplies, hygiene items, and other essentials. Transportation support returned thanks to safe and committed volunteer drivers.

McPIE and Christ Lutheran Church were also blessed to purchase a **brand-new shared van**, which is already enabling McPIE families to attend Family Night clubs, Wednesdays Ablaze dinner and programming, and Sunday worship. The van has helped diversify our congregation and expanded access to community and ministry.

A new partnership with Trips for Kids Charlotte enabled 12 students to participate in Earn-A-Bike, learning bicycle safety, bike maintenance, and trail etiquette. At the final meeting, each participant rode the greenway and took home a bike with lock and light—an extraordinary moment of empowerment and dignity.

Holiday Support & Community Care

Over Thanksgiving, 40 McClintock families received turkeys and all the fixings for a complete holiday meal. At Christmas, Christ Lutheran's Sponsorship Event supported 20 McClintock families with wish list gifts and grocery cards. An additional 10 McClintock/CLC families received Walmart gift cards to make the holiday brighter. Donors, shoppers, wrappers, and volunteers made this possible, demonstrating the deep love and

generosity of our congregation and community.

Looking Ahead: 2026 – McPIE Celebrates 20 Years!

McPIE was formed in April 2007 after a Partnership Summit between CMS and faith-based organizations across Charlotte. In 2026, we will celebrate **20 years of partnership**, transformation, and shared ministry between McClintock and Christ Lutheran Church. Planning is underway, and those interested in joining the celebration committee are asked to contact Angela.

Spring 2026 Family Night begins January 27 and continues through April 28. It takes a village to make this program happen each week—from meals and school supplies to greeting families, driving vans, and leading clubs. New volunteers are welcome, especially for middle school clubs. Summer programming planning is also underway: Science Camp will return for two weeks at McClintock, and Christ Providence will host up to 80 Freedom School Scholars for six weeks. Further opportunities to support will be shared this spring.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela Davis & The McPIE Team



Worship/Music/Technology

In 2025, 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.

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 2025, we announced the news of Bill Porter's resignation. Bill had served as our tech director. In his place, we welcomed Shelby Johns who had been serving as Bill's associate. With Shelby's advancement we also hired her replacement, Kevin Lane, who brings a wealth of knowledge and experience from his work in live production.

The Christ Choir and SpiritSong choral ensembles continued to provide musical worship

leadership at the Traditional, 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 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. Together with Phil, both Traditional and Contemporary choirs saw an increase in number, which is a testament to Phil's leadership from the podium.

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.

We were also fortunate to bring Ethan Dyer on our team as our handbell director, directing Luther Ringers.

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

and directs camera operators. Olivia's role was increased this year and her title changed to Media Producer, reflecting the increased amount of work necessary to produce various forms of media for online and in-person engagement.

The Xperience high school worship ministry continued to provide young students the opportunity to learn how to be worship leaders, providing musical and technical training related to the field of worship leadership. Our summer tour was closer to home, visiting select locations in North and South Carolina, touring Lenoir-Rhyne University and visiting the North Carolina State Capitol along the way. Shelby Johns and Kevin Lane also work to direct the Xperience ministry and did an excellent job of 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 July with 13 children participating in a fun production of Disney's The Jungle Book Kids! CJ Michael and Jessica Lequire directed the production and did an excellent job.

Our middle and high school drama camp, CenterStage, also made its first return post-COVID in July with a production of Matilda Jr, featuring 11 youth actors



Mark Johanson
Minister of Music &
Worship

Worship/Music/Technology (cont.)

under the direction of Brad Stiver and Casey Starkey.

Wednesdays Ablaze programming offered a variety of music options for children beginning with age 2 through high school, with an average of 30 children in attendance each Wednesday. They presented music regularly in worship throughout the year. Mandy McAllister, CJ Michael, Dennis Contreras, and Phil Biedenbender led the musical aspects of the program with Rachel Dyer and Kristen Rank leading Bible stories and other activities.

We said farewell to our dance instructor, Brenna Pennacchi, welcoming Jennifer Youse as our movement instructor.

Under her leadership, we saw increased participation by both boys and girls in movement and dance activities.

In August, Phil and I led a workshop at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Hickory, in connection with the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, to provide choirs and choir directors a day of learning new music, growing musically, and networking. The event was very successful with about 70 participants.

A major project we were fortunate to undertake was the installation service of the North Carolina Synod Bishop, Emily Hartner, in November. This service required a tremendous amount of preparation

and leadership from music and worship aspects, and I am grateful for all of the individuals who assisted with preparing and leading that service.

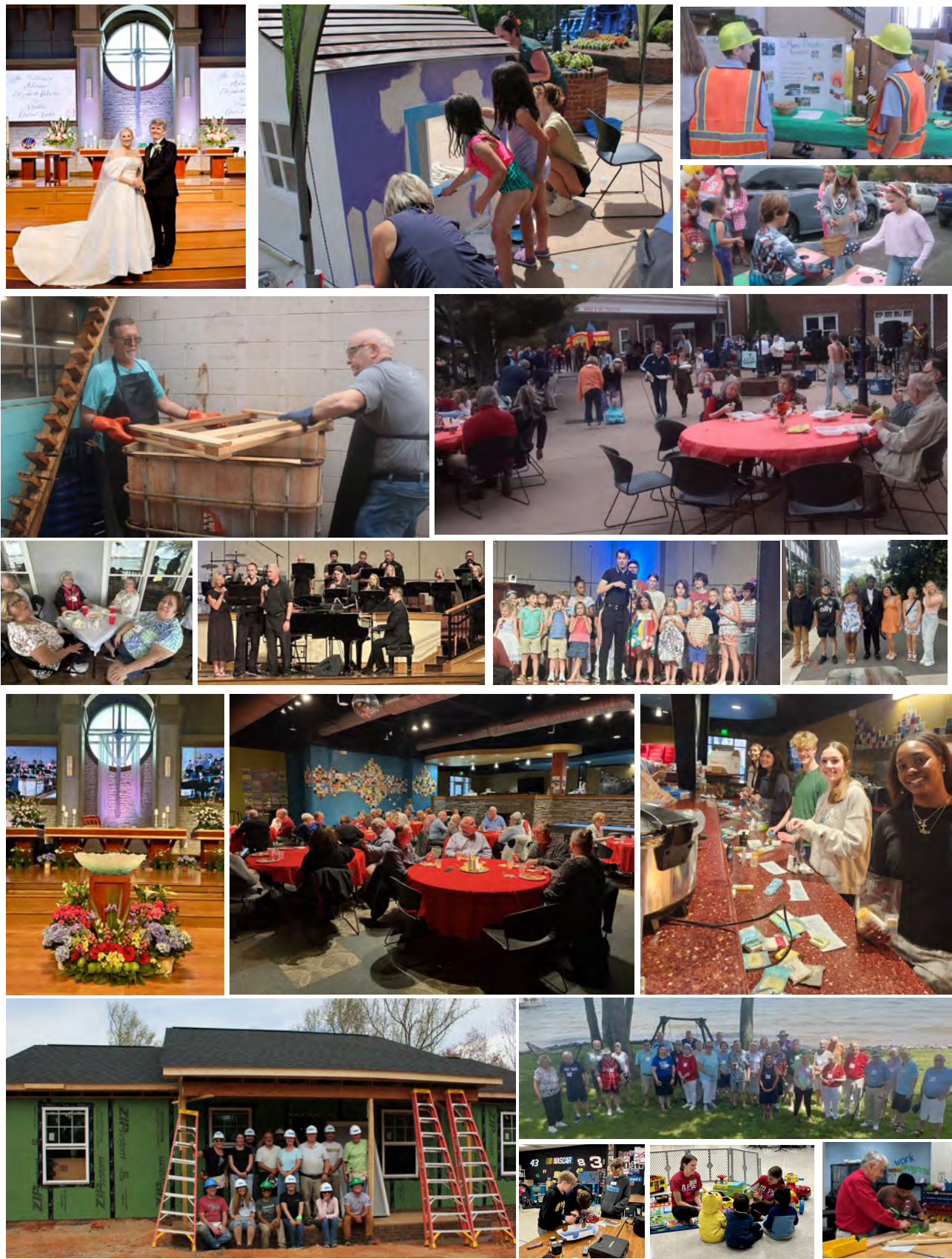
I continue to be amazed at the blessings which God gives to us as a church as we amplify God's Word—literally and figuratively—so that it reaches the eyes and ears of those who need to receive it. It is my prayer that our work blesses the lives of those who gather for worship, who participate in ministry, and who 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



Remembering 2025



Through your generosity, God is at work across the ELCA. A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice. Read stories and learn more at **LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA**.



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