



2025 Annual Report

Senior Pastor's Report

Pastor Kendall Koenig, Senior Pastor



2025 was a strong year of ministry and a year that laid out plans for the future. I encourage you to read through (or at least skim through!) this report to be reminded of the breadth and depth of ministry that you the people of LOC and the amazing staff at LOC accomplish. Of course it is only possible because the Holy Spirit is leading, guiding and empowering us. Without that, we would spin our wheels and meander. But by listening to the Spirit and leaning into the Spirit's strength, so much becomes possible. Here are some highlights.

After preparatory work in 2024, we launched Emotionally Healthy Spirituality in January with over 150 people taking in the classes. EHS invited us to dig deep into our own lives that Jesus might meet us and shape us there. I look forward to the additional practical wisdom that will come in 2026 when we launch Emotionally Healthy Relationship worship

series and classes.

I am including again a worship attendance chart. We continued to experience small growth in "In person" attendance in 2025, though our online attendance slipped back. The online numbers may not be a precise "apples to apples" comparison as Facebook, etc. sometimes change the way they count.

	2022	2023	2024	2025
In-person	371	404	446	454
Online	210	233	284	190
Total	581	637	730	644

2025 is Light of Christ's 40th anniversary year and we are celebrating it throughout this ministry year. The Holy Spirit stirred you to beautiful generosity in our ELCA World Hunger appeal in September. \$21,748.93 was given by LOC members, with an additional \$10K matching gift by a member totaling \$31,748.93—which was then doubled. Amazing! Our worship series in October reflected on four lessons God taught us in those 40 years, and then we had a wonderful banquet and program in November. What a great way to celebrate 40 years of Inviting, Nurturing and Serving! (And a FMSC mobile pack coming this April!)

This past May, I also announced to the congregation my plan for retiring as Senior Pastor at the end of 2027. The Congregation voted in a Call Committee and they have been hard at work seeking out my successor. This is not a common model in the ELCA, but we believe it will help LOC move from strength to strength and not lose momentum in this transition.

This year also involved our Church Council having to deal with some difficult issues behind the scenes regarding previous personnel matters. I am so grateful for the wisdom and grace with which they handled those matters. We have amazing leaders and a great Council—they shone with God's grace!

And finally, I would again like to say a thank-you to the wonderful staff at LOC that lead our important ministries day in and day out. We were blessed to have Pr. Mark Juliet join us this year—what a blessing. And the addition of Mitch Morrison, Meredith Stiles, and Victoria Regan has also brought energy and passion to this work. So grateful for all of them.

I am excited for the year ahead and how God will lead us in the journey of 2026!

Church Council President's Report

Amy Cianciarulo, Council President

2025 was a remarkable year as we celebrated the Goodness of God and the 40th Anniversary of Light of Christ Church!! This fall, it was a gift to gather, celebrate, and reflect on the depth and breadth of our Church's history. The journey has not always been straight or smooth and, at times, it tested our faith in many ways. We remain grateful for the generosity of many past and present Church families who faithfully shared their time, talents, and resources to make this special congregation possible. I am in awe of the brave leaders who stepped out in faith to establish Light of Christ Church, and of the many who have since grown and strengthened it into the vibrant congregation we are today.



Light of Christ is a unique and faithful community, filled with people who are committed to our mission to invite people into Christian community, nurture them in a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ, so they can faithfully and joyfully serve Him.

God has been faithful in His provision, and He is not finished with us yet! In 2025, as we honored our past, we also took meaningful steps to prepare for our future. In May, Pastor Kendall announced his plans for retirement in late 2027. We are profoundly grateful for his more than 20 years of faithful leadership and are thankful for the gift of time to plan well for this transition. Succession planning began last year and continued throughout 2025 as a top priority. It was our goal to ensure that leadership changes and the business of the Church would not distract from the vital ministry and mission of the Church.

In June, the congregation elected a Call Committee to begin the search for our next Senior Pastor. We have an all-star team of active members of Light of Christ, many of whom are former Council Members, and a staff liaison. They began immediately and are following a thoughtful and prayerful process, trusting in God's timing. While only God knows how long the search will take, we are encouraged to share that the committee conducted its first interview in December.

As we continue through this multi-year season of pastoral transition, we are deeply blessed by the stability and strength of our Church Staff. Many of our staff members have served LOC for ten years or more and their faithfulness and dedication are evident in every ministry. It is difficult to list all they do in the remaining pages of this report.

We also celebrate a full year with Pastor Mark, who joined us last January as Interim Associate Pastor. God provided exactly what we needed to continue our work with confidence and care.

2025 marked our first full year following the Ignite Campaign. With no pledged commitments for giving, the previous Council prayerfully planned for a deficit year. Once again, God proved faithful through the generosity of this congregation. Giving exceeded expectations, and we are thrilled we ended the year with a surplus (see financial detail on back pages). This November, families were invited to make financial commitments for 2026. I am overjoyed to share that we anticipate an increase in giving for the year ahead. God has big plans for Light of Christ, and through His faithfulness and your generosity, all things are possible.

As we begin 2026, we move forward with another church-wide initiative, *Emotionally Healthy Relationships*, building on 2025's *Emotionally and Healthy Spirituality*. I pray that you will be blessed by this new season of learning and growth and that you will join us, even if you were unable to participate last year. If you are not currently involved in a ministry or volunteer role, perhaps this is the year to step in. When we unite in community, the people of Light of Christ are a powerful force for God's work.

The bread of ministry and service opportunities at Light of Christ is truly remarkable. LOC is a place of home, comfort, and family for me. I am deeply grateful for every volunteer and staff member who give so generously of themselves. It has been my honor to be your Council President to give back to this special place that has profoundly shaped my life. While there were challenges that deepened my trust and surrender to God and I am thankful for the growth that followed. As I welcome the new members to the Council, I do so with confidence and hope, trusting that God is already providing all that we need in His perfect timing. "With God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). Wishing you God's blessings for the year ahead!



Church Council Secretary's Report

John Orlando, Council Secretary



The Church Council meets every month in Conference Room One or Two. These meetings are God-led and reliant on the Holy Spirit's and Scripture's guidance, as we do the work of the church. Every meeting starts with quiet reflection, prayer, and a review of LOC's mission. Answered prayers are shared and each month a different council member prepares a devotion to reflect on. Secretary's and Treasurer's reports are presented and accepted and any updates with the pre-school are discussed.

Working sessions include ministry updates and updates on other happenings in the congregation, with the staff, and outreach efforts. Notable initiatives from 2025 include: Ignite, Feed My Starving Children mobile pack, our Emotionally Healthy Spirituality series, LOC's 40th anniversary celebration, ongoing support of Prince of Peace services at LOC on Saturday evenings. All of these initiatives have allowed LOC to continue to Invite, Nurture and Serve.

Of particular note, Pastor Kendall has announced his planned retirement in the next two years, and thus considerable time was spent on succession planning for this transition, along with the election of a Call Committee.

Summary of Motions from 2025 Council Minutes:

In addition to monthly motions for acceptance of Council Minutes and Treasurer's Reports, the Council also passed the following:

January 7, 2025

Motion to accept the 2025 proposed budget which includes staff member bonuses from budget surplus accrued in 2024, seconded carried unanimously.

February 11, 2025

Motion to accept the proposed Council positions (as follows) for this year, Seconded, Carried unanimously:

- Amy Cianciarulo-President
- Jennesa Gober-Vice President
- Roger Lall-Treasurer
- John Orlando-Secretary
- Kyla Singleton-Council member
- Rich Johnson-Council member

March 11, 2025

None.

April 8, 2025

Motion to accept the proposed slate of candidates for the call committee, seconded, motion passed unanimously

Motion to begin the succession planning with just the call committee, and then have the call committee evaluate a later decision to use a search firm, seconded, passed unanimously

Motion to have council provide the outline of the "Option 3" interview schedule to the call committee, and then the call committee will be responsible for working through the details at a future time, seconded, passed unanimously.

May 13, 2025

Motion to adjust Yvette's role to 32 hours and adjusting her compensation and benefits accordingly, seconded, carried unanimously.

Motion to continue funding Prince of Peace at \$2K next quarter followed by \$1.5K for the final quarter of this one year period,

seconded, carried unanimously.

June 3, 2025

None.

July 8, 2025

None.

August 19, 2025

Motion to accept edits to the safety policy, seconded, motion passed unanimously

September 16, 2025

Motion to accept the Ministry Site Profile (MSP), seconded, motion passed unanimously via email on 10/2/2025

Motion to clarify that LOC will cover the cost of 400 of the 3" ornament for the 40th anniversary celebration. In addition, "recommended price" for the per ticket price at \$35/person, with up to \$4000 of costs covered by LOC for the event. Seconded, carried unanimously.

Motion that we offer PK, Mark, and Kim to support the additional cost of offering the two Select health insurance options (Copay 2000 and High Deductible Health Plan 2000). If we can only offer a single plan, then it will be the Select Copay 2000. Our desired end state is to have each church employee partaking in this plan to get the same dollars allocated from the church to their plan (which would include some \$ going into the HSA plan for the employee if the employee selects an HDHP plan, assuming that plan can be made available). Seconded, carried unanimously.

October 14, 2025

None.

November 11, 2025

Motion that we renew Pastor Mark's contract under similar terms for another year, starting in Jan 2026. Seconded, carried unanimously.

Motion that the total comp paid to Pastor Kendall from Nov 16th through Dec 31st 2025 will be designated as a housing allowance, totaling \$16,071.32. Seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

December 9, 2025

None

2025 Council Members:

Amy Cianciarulo-President.

Jennesa Gober-Vice President

Roger Lall -Treasurer

John Orlando -Secretary

Kyla Singleton -Council member

Rich Johnson -Council member

Pastor Kendall Koenig

Church Council Changes and Nominations



Amy Cianciarulo and Jennesa Gober have completed their terms and will be transitioning off Church Council after the Annual Congregational Meeting.

They have been great leaders, and we are thankful for their contributions over the past three years.



The Nominees for the 2026 Council Members and additional positions to be voted on at the Annual Congregational Meeting are listed below:

Financial Review Team:

Dan Hendrickson

Nominating Team:

Rosanne Haut

Alyssa Mitchell

Council (three-year term):

Ruby Gross

Ruby Gross has been attending Light Of Christ with her husband, Bob, for the past four years. I have been involved in Women's Ministry, Small Group Leadership and Worship Team. During my professional career in the medical field, I have worked on the front lines as well as in management. I look forward to this opportunity with serving Light Of Christ as a member of the church council.



Dana Pautsch

Dana Pautsch began attending Light of Christ virtually in the summer of 2020, and her family became members in 2022. Since then, Dana has enjoyed serving on the Couples Ministry team, leading a Couple's Small Group, and joyfully supporting other LOC ministries with her family. Raised in the church, Dana experienced a renewed relationship with Christ through formative bible studies as a graduate student and later as a newlywed. Dana and her husband, Mark, have been married 12 years and currently reside in Sleepy Hollow with their three children, Bristol, Sadie, and Jace.

Synod Assembly Delegates:

Phil & Dawn Heil

2 Pending



Children's Ministry Report

Jessica Adams, Director of Children's Ministry

Mitch Morrison, Assistant Director of Children's Ministry

Victoria Regan, Coordinator of Wednesday Night Live Ministry

Elizabeth Cummings, Coordinator of Toddler Care



Our children's ministry is dedicated to nurturing the faith of young hearts by providing a safe, welcoming, and loving environment where children can experience God's love, grow in their faith, and begin to discover their purpose in Christ. Throughout 2025, our ministry was filled with the joyful sounds of children learning and laughing together as they were reminded that God loves them unconditionally, created each of them with intention, and sent Jesus not only to be their friend forever, but also to model the kind of love God desires for the world.

FaithLand Average Monthly Attendance

- Toddler Care 1yr – 3yr | 20 kids
- Preschool & Kindergarten 3yr – 6yr | 37 kids
- Kindergarten – 5th Grade | 77 kids

Wednesday Evenings | Wednesday Night Live

- Children's Choir | 57 kids registered
- WNL Dinner | 55 people served per week
- WNL Program | 97 kids registered

Sacrament & Summer

- First Communion | 25 kids registered
- Vacation Bible School | 237 registered
- VBS Volunteers | 120 youth & adults
- 5 VBS Volunteer Meals generously provided entirely by congregants that's A LOT of food – thank you!



Acknowledgements

Children's Ministries rely heavily on our volunteer teams – and they have been outstanding in their passion and commitment to providing a safe and loving environment where children can experience God's love, grow in their faith, and discover their purpose in Christ. Thank you!!!



New mural created in Children's ministry hallway pointing kids to Jesus, stories of the Bible, and our calling today.

Youth Ministry Report

Kim Carrera, Director of Youth Ministry

Candice Neely, Coordinator of PATH Confirmation Ministry

Ryan Holmer, Summer JAM Coordinator (Summer)

MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY

PATH Confirmation Ministry: 2025-2026: 88 students, 32 leaders. School year enrollment for PATH 2024-2025 was 81 students accompanied by 31 leaders. 13 youth volunteers make up our administrative team that helps with check-in, running activities, organizing materials, and making the night run. Our lessons are from Orange Curriculum. A teaching team was assembled where former PATH leaders, current PATH leaders, LOC congregants taught some of the lessons. Kim, Candi, and the pastors also taught throughout the year.



PATH Retreat 2025: 116 students, leaders, and staff attended this annual weekend retreat that was held at Lake Geneva Youth Camp. The theme of "Crossroads" based off Jeremiah 6:16. It was a powerful weekend where we looked at having respect for community, ourselves, and God. Each lesson had a tie in with Indiana Jones.

PATH Serving Events: During the year, the PATH students assisted with Saturday Serves for LOC, making Angel Tree Ornaments, and Operation Christmas Child. In January we partnered with Children's Ministry and Summit to do a FMSC event. Throughout the year small groups served in many ways, making cards for nursing homes, yard clean-up for LOC families, donating coats, park clean ups, food scavenger hunts, and PATH families helped donate food for the FISH Food Pantry this winter.

PATH BASH: 105 students and leaders, our biggest in years, participated in an afternoon of small group serving around the community. We were led in worship by the youth band. Kim Carrera taught the lesson that night on how it is important to continue to search after God and that He should be our number one thing we follow after.



Rite of Affirmation of Baptism: Following Faith Expression presentations, 25 8th graders affirmed their baptism at confirmation services in May.

Summer JAM: An average of 20+ middle school age students attended throughout the summer. Ryan Holmer plans and leads a great summer of lessons and activities. He along with, Kim Carrera and several high school assistants, led the weekly devotions, games and activities to strengthen spiritual growth. We had 3 different mini teaching series this summer. We had special nacho cheese nights, a water battle, a special Mission Impossible event and we ended the summer with a color run battle. We had an amazing summer!



HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

Summit Youth Group: Summit has ranged weekly from anywhere from 25-30+ high schools and leaders for 2025. Summit has 9 adult leaders. We have welcomed a lot of new students this fall. We are using a curriculum from GROW. Some of the series talked about the importance of having wise people in our lives, creating rhythms in our lives, and how to cat when we are angry. We have topic and movie discussion nights where we take a topic or watched a movie and then talked about the

important issues it showed.

Bible Study: Sunday afternoon Bible Study is a place, where teens plunge deeper into their faith and anywhere from 8-10 students attend at 9am. Throughout 2025 we continued our series on Revelation and used Right Now Media for some series and ended the year with a book series Not a Fan for Teens. and Kim Carrera is the main teacher along with some students led weeks.



13:15. They were split into multiple work crews as they served the community of Kansas City. They served in many ways; some helped serve at community gardens, Project CURE, multiple thrift stores, a food pantry, and a summer school program. We were God's hands and feet as we were learning how important it is to follow after Jesus so closely that we have His dust kicked up on us. 2 youth and Kim Carrera shared in the weekend worship message focused on the serving that was done and life transformation experienced. The students also led music alongside Meghan Parquette for the LOC congregation the weekend of the mission trip message.



Summer Summit: We spent this summer connecting through fellowship and some fun events. In May we welcomed the 8th graders to Summit at a Pizza event. Over the summer we did some fun things like a movie night, pool party, mini golf, lessons, and a special worship night where we prayed over the college students who were heading off. This summer 2 students put on a Murder Mystery Night, where we all dressed up and ran around the church finding clues, it was an amazing night. We

spent our Thursdays having Froyo Thursdays where it was just time to get together during the week and fellowship over froyo. In the beginning of the summer, we had a LOCK-in where 40 high school students and 6 leaders enjoyed a night of fun with no sleep. 2 former Summit students planned and led the night.



Serving Joyfully: During the year, Summit has found some fun ways to serve. We have been partnering with FISH Food Pantry in Carpentersville where we served in the spring on a Tuesday night. We spent a Tuesday night doing some cleaning around the church, and we partnered with Children's Ministry and PATH to do a FMSC event in January.

Summit helped donate food for the FISH Food Pantry this winter. A handle full of our students also serve at LOC; helping with the children's choir and are part of the Sunday worship team.

Winter Retreat 2025: In February, 23 students and leaders went to Lake Geneva Youth Camp in Lake Geneva Wisconsin for a weekend retreat. The theme of the weekend was "The Great Race" of Hebrews 12:1-2, where we were reminded to run our race with endurance and share the gospel with others in a way that makes sense to them. Students grew in their faith as they learned the true work that matters is to make disciples. It was a powerful weekend where student grew closer within the Summit community but also with Christ.

Mission Trip: 45 high school students and adult leaders went to Kansas City, MO and partnered with YouthWorks. The theme for the week of serving was "Dust". The main scripture for the week was from John

Worship and Music Ministry Report

Josh Jones, Director of Worship

Jack Belford, Director of Worship Production

Beca Malmgren, Director of Children's Music

Carrie Weyers, Altar Care Coordinator

Rita Popovich, Scripture Readers Coordinator



WORSHIP

In 2025, Light of Christ crafted meaningful worship experiences through collaboration among pastors, staff, the Worship Band Team, Production Team, Welcome Team, Children's Choir, Altar Care Team, and Scripture Readers Team.

We offered Sunday morning services at 9:00 am and 10:30 am, each featuring a preaching pastor, presiding pastor, and worship band performing contemporary songs and hymns. The Children's Choir became a regular presence in our services throughout the year.

Our Worship Ministry

flourished with approximately 40 musicians across our worship bands, welcoming several new members. We incorporated creative elements into select worship series to provide fresh experiences. Our Christmas Eve 10 pm service featured a chamber wind ensemble, while Easter Sunday showcased a brass section.

Planning Center Online Services software streamlines our coordination, bringing all worship ministries together in one centralized platform for scheduling and planning.



We remained committed to being "one church in two locations" at 1700 Longmeadow and online, ensuring a full worship experience for congregants who engage primarily through digital platforms.

Production Team

The Light of Christ Church Production Team is dedicated to sharing the message and worship music through live in-person services and across digital platforms including YouTube, Facebook, and the LOC Website and Podcast. Working faithfully behind the scenes, we integrate sound, lighting, and visual media to support meaningful worship. Our team specializes in Live and Broadcast Sound, ProPresenter (Projection), Camera Operation, Broadcast Video Mixing, Stage and Room Lighting, Event Technical Planning, and Logistics. Together, these skills allow us to deliver high-quality worship experiences that foster connection and spiritual engagement for all attendees—both in person and online.

The Production Team plays a vital role in supporting every ministry at Light of Christ. From Children's Ministry to Women's and Men's Ministry, Youth programs, Small Groups, Preschool,



and Pastoral events, we provide the technical excellence and creative support needed to help each ministry communicate its message effectively.

2025 Highlights

In 2025, we strengthened our workflows, expanded training opportunities, and improved the quality of our weekend worship production. We also successfully accomplished the goals we set for the year, including:

- Increasing volunteer training across all technical roles
- Applying updated lighting and staging techniques
- Incorporating new tools and production methods
- Enhancing team communication and collaboration
- Deepening our support of LOC ministries for events, worship, and special services

These improvements have contributed to more consistent, distraction-free production across worship services and enhanced engagement for our online community.

Looking Ahead to 2026

Building on this momentum, we are developing new goals that will help shape the next season of ministry:

- **Expand Volunteer Development:** Offer tiered skill training, leadership development, and cross-training opportunities for volunteers.
- **Lighting & Visual Enhancements:** Introduce creative lighting updates, stage looks, and visual elements that support the storytelling of worship.
- **Technology Modernization:** Plan for upgrades in sound, video, lighting, and broadcast systems to maintain high-quality production standards.
- **Strengthen Ministry Integration:** Establish more proactive planning with each ministry to improve event support and communication.
- **Improve Online Engagement:** Continue refining our livestream quality and explore new ways to reach and engage online worshipers.
- **Build a Sustainable Team Structure:** Continue enhancing volunteer recruitment, scheduling, and succession planning to ensure long-term health of the Production Team.

We remain committed to excellence and to using technology as a tool for ministry—supporting meaningful worship, strengthening connection, and allowing the Gospel to reach people both within our walls and beyond them.



LOC is proud of our Production Team:

Alex Libes
Arianna Libes
Blake Regan
Brian Lockhart
Cathy Fulgham
Chris Wolf
Dean Popovich
Diana Schmid

Hinrich Schmidt
Jack Belford
Jennifer Gonzalez
Joe Matlachowski
Jude Columbia
Julian Gonzalez
Kristen Lockhart
Mark Foster

Rich Stiles Jr.
Sam Weyers
Scott Morgan
Steve Witwicki
Steven Schmid
Tony Gonzalez
Tyler Parquette
Will Little

Children's Music

Children's Music Light of Christ Theater Camp 2025 was so inspiring and truly showcased the kids' bravery and amazing talent in the show *Shrek Jr.* In just two weeks, this group of about 50 campers created a whole show complete with singing and dancing, they even did all the backstage work on their own! This is such a fun time, and it was so beautiful to see the kids supporting and helping each other.

We've had a strong start to the 2025-26 LOC Children's Choir year. With about 70 kids in the choir, and about 40 that come regularly we've been honored to share many songs during worship at the 9 and 10:30 services as well



as at Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve. We also worked very hard and presented the Christmas

musical, *We Knead a Little Christmas*. The kids worked SO hard at home and rehearsal every week, and they did an amazing job telling us a story of the bakery, House of Bread, next to the inn and stable where Jesus was born. It was so amazing to watch the kids discover the miracle of Jesus through bread puns! The Children's Choir has also been blessed to have seven talented Jr. Leaders, all who have graduated from Children's Choir!

Altar Care

Altar Care is the ministry team that is responsible for communion each week. Our team prepares and cleans up the elements: bread, wine, white grape juice, gluten free wafers, and prepackaged communion. We assist with baptisms when needed and other projects that involve communion. We consider ourselves "behind the scenes flexible troubleshooters", but most of all, team players with the musicians, production team, communion servers, ushers, staff, and pastors.

We meet monthly for one hour via zoom to review the schedules and discuss upcoming events and what is needed from our team.

Our team members are Jaki Berggren, Deb Cummings, Amy Krempel, Judy Mandelky, Sarah Walrack, Bri Weyers, Carrie Weyers, and on hiatus is Jane Simon. Our families are also unofficial members of Altar Care, and we want to thank them for pitching in.

We are always looking for new members to join our team and/or bake communion bread.

Please contact Carrie Weyers at carrieweyers@gmail.com to learn more about our team and how you can be involved!

Scripture Readers

Our Scripture Reading Team consists of 13 active volunteers who use Planning Center Online Services to self-schedule for worship services. We provide scripture passages to readers in advance, giving them time to prepare before their scheduled service. The system operates smoothly with minimal leadership oversight, as readers sign up independently. This year, we've strengthened our collaboration with other ministries, particularly the Welcome Ministry, which has helped us onboard new members more quickly and efficiently train them on our procedures.



Adult Ministry Report

Yvette Butler, Director of Adult Ministry



I can't believe how quickly 2025 flew by. It feels like I was just reflecting on 2024 and marveling at all God was doing. 2025 brought a few unexpected challenges (of course it did), but our lay leaders and volunteers rose to the occasion, trusted God, and poured their hearts into their ministries. The result was beautiful fruit and a continued reminder that God is always at work.

Adult Ministries continued to grow as we welcomed new faces seeking community, belonging, and deeper faith. Adding MomCo was truly the cherry on top! Young moms of littles are being mentored, loved, and poured into by faithful veteran moms who understand the highs, lows, and everything in between of motherhood.

It has been an absolute joy to serve as Director of Adult Ministries at Light of Christ in 2025, made possible only by our faithful volunteers and lay leaders. Without them, Adult Ministry

would not exist.

As I head into 2026, I do so with great expectancy and excitement for all God will continue to do among us. Blessings.

BIBLE STUDY

Pastor Kendall Co-Ed Bible Study

Every Wednesday from 9:00–10:30 a.m., September through May, 30 (plus) people gather to dive into Scripture together. What makes this group special is how welcoming it is—whether you're brand new to the Bible or have been studying for years, you'll feel right at home. It's a relaxed space to learn, share thoughts, ask questions, and grow in faith. The group is co-ed, spans different ages, and has become a meaningful weekly rhythm for many in our community.

SMALL GROUPS

Small groups are growing! After our church-wide study on *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*, one new men's group and two new women's groups were formed. These EHS discussion groups had formed close friendships and bonded through their experience, and wanted to keep growing in faith and spiritual health together. In addition, another couples group was formed to make room for couples to learn and mature in their faith together.

Small groups consist of 7 – Men's groups, 9 -Women's groups, 2- Couples' groups, 1- Co-Ed group, and a Young Adult Small Group that meets weekly or bi-monthly. Our mission is to keep plugging in people at Light of Christ to these smaller, more intimate communities of discipleship and worship.

In the fall, we kicked off with a Small Group Leader Huddle. With the help of two strong and faithful leaders, the Huddle was designed to be more than just training. It's a space for building relationships, offering encouragement, and praying together as a team of small group leaders.

Seasoned leaders shared from their deep well of wisdom with newer leaders, and as we saw at our September Huddle, the new leaders bring fresh insights, energy, and wisdom of their own so that we all benefited from attending. I look forward to another successful Huddle in the Spring.

MEN'S MINISTRY

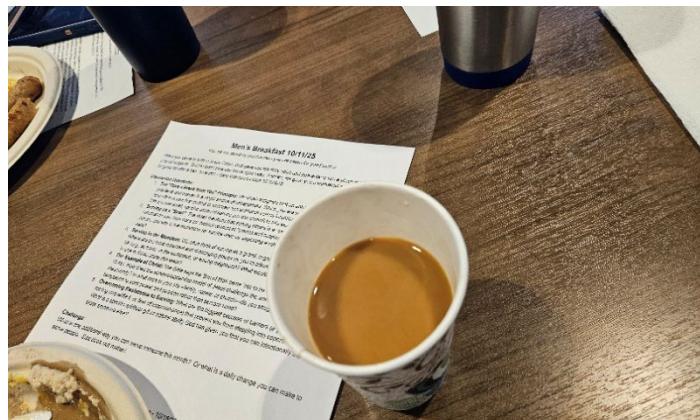
Midway through the year, the Men's Ministry lay leadership baton was passed from Jim Weicek, who led with a deep love for Jesus and the men he served, to Dan Kiehl, who joined Light of Christ, with his family in early 2023, and brings that same heart and passion to this ministry.

Dan is working diligently with the faithful men's leadership team to bring men a consistent and welcoming place to gather. Plans are underway for the Men's One Day in fall 2026, continuing the goal of reaching out to men beyond the LOC community and inviting them to a meaningful day of faith, fellowship, and connection.

The men are looking to welcome more amazing men to the leadership team in 2026.

Fall Kick-off – BBQ & Bags

The tradition of BBQ & Bags returned in 2025 with a bang, having 40 men in attendance. The brilliant men's ministry team strategically planned the date so it wouldn't conflict with any other faithful practices that also kick off in the fall (haha)! It was great to see familiar faces with new ones competing for the beloved BAGS Tournament Trophy. Lot's of good food, laughs and friendly (always friendly) competition.



Monthly Breakfast:

Men's Ministry continues to draw 30 to 40 men each month, who come together to discuss real-life topics and how faith fits into everyday living. The team continues to serve the men of Light of Christ with a hearty breakfast and great conversation. It's been wonderful to see new faces at breakfast, and we're hoping to see more as the year continues.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

After much prayer and consideration, Leah Morgan stepped into the role of Women's Ministry Lead in 2025. Along with 5 other mighty women that make up the leadership team, Leah has approached this role with joy and a heart to pour out love and care to the women of LOC. I am so grateful for these incredible women and the beautiful way they collaborate, each bringing their unique gifts to bless and strengthen our community.

Girl's Night In:

This year's ministry kick-off theme was Celebrating Women for their faith, resilience and purpose. We had 37 women in attendance along with 9 children in childcare. Adding on free childcare for the Women's GNI has helped to include women with young children, to share in these fun monthly gatherings. Each month, we invite different women of faith to deliver a powerful message that inspires conversations that are both challenging and encouraging, and bring refreshment to the souls of the steady stream of 30-plus participants.



Weekend Retreat:

The Women's Ministry Weekend Retreat took place at the gorgeous Lutherdale Retreat and Conference Center on Lauderdale Lakes, the last weekend of April. The gathering and the weather were warm and inviting.

Thirty-five women joined together for an intimate and inspiring weekend exploring *The Journey of Becoming*, discovering who God created each of us to be. Three amazing women courageously shared what God had placed on their hearts, guiding others into powerful and meaningful encounters with Him and with one another. Beyond the talks, we had engaging discussion groups, quiet journal and reflection time, and plenty of moments to relax, recharge, and connect with each other. It was a weekend full of laughter, learning, and community that left us all refreshed and encouraged.



Aspire Women's Event

LOC Women's Ministry had the pleasure of hosting The Aspire Women's Event on October 11th. The worship center was filled with high energy as gifted Bible teacher and author Barb Roose, hilarious comedian Michelle Miller, and the incredible Mia Koehne, leading worship, made it a night to remember.

The Aspire team spoke straight to the hearts of almost 90 women from different churches and denominations. What makes Aspire so special is its ability to pack an entire evening with laughter, learning, powerful stories, and soul-stirring worship music, engaging women of all ages and stages of life and all faith backgrounds.



COPLES MINISTRY

The Couple's Ministry is led by Brittany and Nathan Hyde, along with two other energetic, fun-loving, and creative couples who share a deep passion for connecting couples at Light of Christ. Their heart is to help couples build meaningful, long-lasting, and supportive relationships. They do this by hosting events throughout the year that create space for connection, laughter, and growth to strengthen relationships and build a strong, supportive community among couples.

Road Rally 2025

Couples of all ages enjoyed a fun-filled afternoon of a scavenger hunt followed by a time of celebration together. The heart behind the event was to give couples a chance to step away from the busyness of everyday life, focus on one another, and work toward a shared goal.

Seven couples participated while sixteen children had a blast in childcare at Light of Christ. It was another beautiful example of how LOC cares for its community, creating space for couples to reconnect while ensuring children are lovingly cared for in a safe environment.



SENIOR EXPLORERS' MINISTRY

The mission of the Senior Explorers Ministry is to discover new ideas, build new relationships, and explore new ways to serve. This mighty team of 12 volunteers, guided by Donna Fattes and Tim Hedlin, truly enjoys their time together while creating engaging, meaningful, and fun activities throughout the year. And while the name may say "Senior," you don't have to be one to attend; everyone is welcome to have fun and learn something new at the events they host!

Lunar New Year Celebration

On January 24th, 31 people attended this celebratory event with an incredible presentation by Tim Hedlin on the Mission Aviation Fellowship. This inspired donations of \$350 to MAF to help continue their ministry.



Easter Serving Opportunity

On April 11th, a group of seniors met in the Welcome Center to stuff Easter Eggs for the Annual Easter Egg Hunt held at Light of Christ. There are hundreds of eggs that were filled that day and enjoyed by many children on Easter!



Discover the Good Earth Event – April 11th

31 people gathered to hear Brad Andressen, ecologist and horticulturist from the Village of Algonquin, speak on growing and maintaining space around Algonquin to protect natural land and support a healthy environment. All ages enjoyed this interesting presentation and delicious meal.



Preschool Rocket Launch – May 6th

Tim Hedlin, with some of the Senior Explorers enthralled the LOC preschoolers with an incredible rocket launch. Prior to the launch, Tim H. talked about the two rockets named Michael and Gabriel. Each rocket had a cross hanging from its parachute, with the words "Jesus Loves Me". The launch was a great success and so fun for all the participants.

Tim is now known as "Rocket Man Tim" by the preschoolers.



Pop-up Event – Concert at Algonquin Towne Park – August 21st

16 Seniors enjoyed a beautiful evening at the newly renovated Algonquin Towne Park for some great music and fellowship. Blue Balloons marked the spot for everyone to meet in one place.



Pizza and Movie Night – October 11th

A great fall evening, with 41 people joining together to view the entertaining movie "Second Hand Lions," preceded by pizza and lively conversation.



ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality – Eight Week Study, January 27th - March 24th

In 2025, Light of Christ offered *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* by Pete Scazzero as a church-wide study. Over 150 people joined this journey into emotional and spiritual health, either in person or online, on Monday | Tuesday evenings, and Wednesday mornings, to learn that we cannot be emotionally immature and spiritually healthy at the same time.

Participants explored meaningful topics such as family upbringing, discovering their authentic self in Christ, navigating difficult seasons, processing grief and loss, and learning to slow down to cultivate a more contemplative spiritual life for a richer-deeper relationship with Jesus.



It was a blessing to see so many engaged and experiencing breakthrough moments.

The other part of this course, Emotionally Healthy Relationship, is offered once again as an 8-week church-wide study in January.

Devotionals:

Weekly devotionals related to the Sunday sermons continue to be shared with the congregation by 6 members of our passionate writing team, featuring a relatable message for deeper thought during the week. from one of the incredibly gifted members of our Devotional Writing Team.

E3: Explore, Engage, Experience 2025 – February 14-16th

In 2025, 60 adults joined the E3: Explore, Engage, and Experience journey. Led by the dedicated E3 Serving Team, made up of past participants, this weekend is designed for anyone seeking to deepen their faith and build meaningful community. Each year, E3 offers a powerful experience through relatable talks, small group discussions, lively worship, reflective moments, and, of course, plenty of fun. Participants leave with a new or *renewed* life-giving relationship with the Lord and with one another.



SPORTS MINISTRY

LOC Co-Ed Bowling League

The LOC Bowling Ministry kicked off 2025 with an exciting change, moving the league to Hi-Bowl Lanes in Huntley. The new location offers updated technology and well-maintained lanes, creating a great environment for league play on the third Sunday of each month. Christine and Russ Reinger do a wonderful job of forming and leading the league, fostering a close-knit, fun community that comes together from fall through spring to compete, connect, and encourage one another. Every level of ability is welcome.



LOC Co-Ed Softball League

Friday night Softball has been a beloved tradition at Light of Christ for many years. In 2025, the league moved forward with one team made up of 10 men and 10 women, creating a relaxed, less competitive environment where everyone can simply enjoy the game.

Our fearless team manager and lay leader, Russ Reinger, stepped down from managing the league this year, though he hopes to continue playing alongside friends on Friday nights. We are grateful for his years of faithful leadership.

Joel Neely has generously volunteered to step into the role of manager, ensuring this cherished softball tradition continues. Softball remains a wonderful on-ramp into the LOC faith community, welcoming friends and family to come out, cheer on their players, and enjoy warm summer evenings together.

Every level of ability is welcome.



CHILDCARE MINISTRY TEAM

We are truly blessed by our dedicated 13 member childcare team, who make it possible for parents to participate more fully in the many ministry opportunities highlighted in this annual report. This faithful, hard-working team of 12-18-year-olds regularly cares for children at Couples' Monday Night Small Group, monthly Women's Ministry GNI gatherings, membership classes, annual meetings, volunteer training meetings, and special events for Couples Ministry, along with any other needs that arise along the way.

We are deeply grateful to this team that creates a safe, welcoming, and fun space for our children, giving parents peace of mind and the opportunity to engage.

MomCo Ministry

Candi Neely, MomCo Coordinator
Kaylin Nelson, KidCo Team Lead
Megan Lebar, MomCo Volunteer Team Lead

MomCo (formerly MOPS) exists to **encourage, equip, and connect moms** to thrive in motherhood and faith. Our ministry provides a welcoming, Christ-centered community where moms experience belonging, spiritual growth, and practical support for everyday life. This year, MomCo focused on:

- Building authentic community among moms
- Deepening spiritual formation
- Supporting families during key life seasons
- Creating an inviting on-ramp to church connection



Friday Morning MomCo Meetings

Our Friday morning gatherings serve as the core rhythm of MomCo. These meetings include teaching, small group discussion, prayer, and fellowship. They provide moms with consistent space to grow spiritually, build friendships, and be encouraged in their season of motherhood. We have had been blessed with wonderful speakers who have shared their areas of expertise and their love of Jesus.

Thursday Night MomCo Book Club

The Thursday night book club was created to reach moms who are unable to attend daytime meetings. This smaller, evening-format gathering fosters deeper conversation, reflection, and connection through faith-based reading and discussion, expanding MomCo's accessibility and impact.

MomCo Summer Pop-Ups

During the summer months, MomCo offers informal pop-up gatherings such as playdates, park meetups, and social events. These pop-ups maintain connection during the off-season, welcome new moms, and keep relationships strong in a low-pressure, relational setting. Offering multiple gathering formats allows MomCo to meet moms where they are and remain connected throughout the year.

KidCo Childcare Ministry

Our MomCo ministry is supported by **KidCo**, our childcare ministry headed up by **Kaylin Nelson**. The KidCo team lovingly cares for our little ones, creating a safe, nurturing environment while moms are given intentional time to connect with God and build relationships with one another.

KidCo plays a vital role in the success of MomCo by:

- Providing consistent, trustworthy childcare
- Partnering in the spiritual formation of families
- Allowing moms to fully engage in teaching, discussion, and community

Participation & Reach

- **Soft Launch (January 2025):** 24 moms registered
- **Summer Popups:** 42 Registered
- **Current Semester Registration:** Friday Morning MomCo: 19 moms, 8 children registered
Thursday Night MomCo Book Club: 15 moms registered

Looking Ahead

In the coming year, we plan to:

- Continue strengthening **Friday Morning MomCo** as a consistent space for spiritual growth and community
- Grow the **Thursday Night MomCo Book Club** to reach working moms and those unavailable during the day
- Expand **MomCo Summer Pop-Ups** to maintain connection and invite new moms during the off-season
- Strengthen volunteer recruitment and support for **KidCo childcare**
- Create clear next steps that help moms connect more deeply to church life, small groups, and serving

Serving Report

Mark Juliet, Associate Pastor



ASP – Appalachian Service Project

LOC partners with ASP to help make homes in Appalachia warmer, safer and drier. For many years, LOC has sent adults on this mission trip, making a difference in the lives of both participants and those they serve. In June 2025, a group of thirteen individuals from Light of Christ returned to Jonesville, VA, to assist with residential projects

within the local community. The participants consistently express the significance of serving and how, despite encountering unavoidable challenges, they have a fun and memorable experience.



Branching out Tutoring

Branching Out Tutoring remains an invaluable blessing to the community, extending educational assistance to students with financial needs from local schools. Adult tutors from Light of Christ Church generously provide their time and support, making tutoring services available throughout the year.

ELCA World Hunger

In the fall of 2025, LOC made a huge impact on those facing hunger in the U.S. and throughout the world through the ELCA World Hunger program. A generous donation from an LOC family challenged the congregation to raise \$10K which would be doubled by the match. Then, that would be sent to the Northern IL Synod of the ELCA where it would be matched again, essentially turning our \$10K into \$40K in honor of LOC's 40th anniversary. The congregation blew past the \$10K goal, raising nearly \$22K. This was added to gifts from other Lutheran congregations around Northern Illinois totaling over \$330,000 dollars to ELCA World Hunger!



Food Pantries

The need for food assistance is growing, and Light of Christ is responding by serving through two area food pantries: the Algonquin-Lake in the Hills Food Pantry and FISH Food Pantry in Carpentersville. Every Monday a group of LOC folks volunteer at the Algonquin-LITH pantry by transporting and sorting non-perishable donations from area food retailers. The LOC community has responded overwhelmingly to food drives and people are encouraged to donate non-perishables at any time during the year utilizing the collection bins in the entryway.

Golden Diners

A dedicated group of volunteers deliver meals weekly to elderly or disabled individuals in the Algonquin Area. This ministry added several volunteers this year but experienced a setback when Catholic Charities handed off the program to another organization. We are hopeful to begin serving again under this new organization.

Operation Christmas Child

The annual Christmas initiative by Samaritan's Purse, which collects shoeboxes filled with special gifts for children worldwide, received strong support from Light of Christ. A total of 210 boxes has been donated by the LOC community and the number of boxes donated online continues to increase.

Replanted

LOC offers support and encouragement to adoptive and foster families through Replanted, a faith-based ministry. This group now meets monthly at Light of Christ.

Servants Out Serving (SOS) Ministry

This industrious group of leaders motivated by servant hearts coordinates activities throughout the year to serve the local community. The entire LOC congregation is encouraged to participate in the various events.

Through the Random Acts of Kindness Event during February, the LOC congregation was challenged to complete a Bingo card with various Random Acts of Kindness including assisting loved ones, serving at local agencies, and more.

SOS began the school year with a Backpack and School Supplies drive. LOC generously provided 120 backpacks to kids at three area elementary schools, local families and through FISH food pantry. Thanks to monetary donations totaling \$600, we were able to purchase additional supplies, including 100 student headphones for Meadowdale Elementary.

Through the Coat & Winter Gear Drive LOC gave an abundance of winter wear to Second Bridge, which serves foster children in McHenry County. Nearly 140 winter clothing items were donated including 61 coats, 28 pairs of gloves, 25 hats and various other items to keep kids warm.

In 2025 LOC hosted two events for Fellowship Housing. Fellowship Housing assists single moms with not only housing but by offering stability, dignity, and a new path forward through safe housing, financial coaching, and a community that believes in them.

We held our first volunteer day in several years at a local Habitat for Humanity house. We look to grow this ministry in the coming year.

Over 50 LOC volunteers showed up at our Fall Mobile Food Pantry, and we served 62 families totaling 248 adults and children from our surrounding community.

Through our annual Turkey Drive LOC donated 138 turkeys coming in at 1,717 lbs. We also collected 967 lbs. of non-perishable food, making it a total of 2,684 lbs. of food for FISH Food Pantry in Carpentersville.

Through the Angel Tree we collected over 350 gifts and gift cards for local organizations caring for children, the homeless community, and local families.

THANK YOU to the leaders, volunteers and LOC community who give generously of your time, energy and resources to serve our local and global neighbors through all of these outreach efforts!

iCare

In the midst of life's moments, we need someone to walk beside us and help us feel God's love and care. The iCare ministry was created to utilize confidential one-on-one relationships between volunteers and recipients so support can be there in those difficult moments.

Care continued throughout 2025 with approximately 20 volunteers providing care through their iCare matches or through coaching the iCare allies partnered with a recipient.

Concerns the iCare ministry helped with included life transitions, grief or loss, illness, caregiver stress and more. While iCare volunteers continued to serve recipients they also met as a group and completed continuing education training on topics such as Mindfulness, Building and Creating Support Systems, and the resources available both at Light of Christ and in our Community.

Thank you to our iCare allies, coaches, and the leadership team who have prioritized this ministry throughout the year to ensure ongoing support is available to those in need.

Looking to the year ahead, we plan to further increase the visibility of the iCare program within the church and we plan to make sure to continue to support caregivers with ongoing coaching as well as continuing education opportunities.



Outreach Marketing Team

The Outreach Marketing Team is responsible for the marketing of Light of Christ special events to the congregation and the surrounding community. Over the years we have used different marketing strategies to market these events. This year we have tried to concentrate on tools for the congregation to use on social media platforms to share with their followers to invite others to an event.

Two of our team's main focus events are Easter and Christmas.

The Children's Easter Egg Hunt was a terrific success this year. We added online registration with 400 family's preregistering and another 100 registered on the day of the event. By far the largest we have ever had. One of our goals with this event is to hopefully make it convenient for families to attend the Egg hunt and our 5:00 worship service. It worked, the Saturday 5:00pm worship service was the largest attended to date.

Christmas in Algonquin has been our theme for the last couple of years. From a social media emphasize, direct mailing campaign, a photo booth in the welcome center and a sign on the corner of the church property, this is all done in an effort to make people know they have a place to worship during the Christmas holidays.

The team is made up of Al Gibbon as the Lay leader, Cathy Fulgham, Amy Krempel, and Mark Alderson.



LOC Preschool Report

Denise DiSilvio, LOC Preschool Director



At Light of Christ Preschool, we joyfully celebrate God's love for all children. Since our founding in 1991, our mission has remained the same: to instill a lifelong love of learning in every student. We are proud to offer a balanced approach that blends play-based learning with academics. Our preschoolers engage in a curriculum that supports their social, emotional, physical, and cognitive growth. With an exceptional teaching staff, we strive to provide a safe, nurturing environment that fosters the development of the whole child.

We are grateful for a wonderful start to the 2025–2026 school year. This year marks my fifth year serving as the preschool director at LOC Preschool. We are currently blessed with three 4-year-old classes, three 3-year-old classes, and two 2-year-old classes, totaling 113 students. We have wonderful support from our amazing families—there is no greater compliment than receiving referrals from those who know us best.

Throughout the year, we host a variety of special events to stay connected with our families. These include Dads, Dudes, and Donuts in September; Fall Festival in October; Christmas Sing and Breakfast with Baby Jesus in December; Moms and Muffins in February; Grandparents Day in March; and Spring Sing in April. Our students also enjoy weekly Bible lessons, Music class, and Stretch N Grow. We even had a visit from the Randall Oaks Zoo. In November, we continued our annual food drive, collecting donations for the D300 Community School District food pantry. We are continually inspired by the generosity of our preschool families.



The teachers and I are excited to begin registration for the 2026–2027 school year. Registration will start on February 2nd for church members, February 4th for current preschool families, and February 9th for the community. Each new school year brings us the joy of welcoming new friends and continuing to serve the wonderful families already with us. We feel truly blessed and honored to teach the young children of our community.



SERVING ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN
locchurch.com

Light of Christ

2026 Proposed Budget

General Fund	2023 Actual	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	2025 Actual	2026 Budget
General Income					
General Offering	\$1,691,239	\$1,587,215	\$1,282,400	\$1,325,058	\$1,392,300
Loose Plate	\$5,739	\$7,183	\$6,200	\$9,513	\$8,500
Pre-School	\$33,159	\$38,771	\$43,100	\$44,026	\$44,700
Other Income	\$22,882	\$27,597	\$25,050	\$22,133	\$19,000
Total Income	\$1,753,019	\$1,660,767	\$1,356,750	\$1,400,731	\$1,464,500
General Expenses					
Council Expenses & Staff Compensation	\$852,670	\$945,191	\$910,764	\$907,721	\$951,175
Operations (Office Related, Utilities, Cleaning)	\$120,982	\$119,045	\$124,760	\$127,568	\$132,620
Maintenance (Snow Removal, Landscaping, Small Repairs)	\$47,903	\$33,421	\$40,490	\$37,936	\$50,290
Sr Pastor (<i>Evangelism, Stewardship, Staff Development</i>)	\$27,939	\$26,529	\$28,715	\$23,519	\$33,915
Assoc Pastor	\$4,810	\$2,641	\$4,000	\$1,213	\$4,500
Worship & Music	\$19,287	\$19,359	\$21,295	\$17,756	\$22,460
Adult Ministry	\$10,852	\$9,051	\$19,260	\$10,347	\$16,900
Youth Ministry	\$6,565	\$6,587	\$8,100	\$7,083	\$10,300
Childrens Ministry	\$13,664	\$10,049	\$11,500	\$10,616	\$11,850
Members Connections (new (from Welcome Ministry))	\$0	\$1,771	\$2,700	\$1,849	\$2,700
Welcome Ministry & Communications	\$6,180	\$4,265	\$4,500	\$2,876	\$4,500
Total Operating Expenses	\$1,110,850	\$1,177,909	\$1,176,084	\$1,148,484	\$1,241,210
Mortgage Payments					
Ignite Initiatives					
Lutheran World Relief, YoungLife & Piano	(\$236,700)	(\$236,700)	(\$236,700)	(\$236,700)	(\$236,700)
Other Initiatives (Diversity, Online & Community Growth)	(\$55,000)	(\$25,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other Initiatives (Memorial Garden, Community Serving)	(\$33,057)	(\$45,028)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Faithland Wing projects: Blinds & Accountic panels	(\$34,856)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Faithland Wing projects: Blinds & Accountic panels		(\$21,838)			
Total Ignite Initiatives & Projects		(\$122,913)	(\$91,866)	\$0	\$0
Other Income					
Transfer from New Building Fund for mortgage	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total General Fund (year surplus after Mortgage & Ignite items)	\$282,557	\$154,291	(\$56,034)	\$15,546	(\$13,410)
Extra Mortgage Principal					
	(\$400,000)	(\$100,000)	\$0	(\$10,000)	\$0
Total General Fund Year surplus/(deficit)	(\$117,443)	\$54,291	(\$56,034)	\$5,546	(\$13,410)
Fund Balance - Beg of Year	\$623,138	\$505,694	\$559,986	\$559,986	\$565,532
Fund Balance - End of Year	\$505,694	\$559,986	\$503,952	\$565,532	\$552,122

Original Mortgage, March 2021	\$3,737,729
Mortgage Balance (1/1/2025)	\$2,382,197
Mortgage Principal YTD	\$153,496
Mortgage Balance (12/31/2025)	\$2,228,701



Worship Schedule

Sunday: 9AM and 10:30AM

Offices open Monday-Thursday: 8:30AM-4:30PM

Friday: 8:30AM-12:00PM

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