



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America



# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

# A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

All around us, we see signs of God's love and goodness. A person who has stepped away from church for many years steps back into a congregation, feeling the call of the Holy Spirit. Young adults feeling isolated in a digital-first world start gathering in person in a small group, enjoying the warmth of a hug and a new friend asking about their week. A mother plants a garden, and it yields fruits and vegetables, giving her nutritious food for her kids and extra produce to sell at the local market. Everywhere we look, we see signs of Christ's love. In Psalm 93, we read: "More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the Lord! Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore" (4-5).

God's love is a majestic thing, and it moves us to share it in word and deed. The ministries of our congregations, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together to share God's love with people in our neighborhoods, across our country and around the world.

I am so grateful for you, dear church. Your generosity to each of these three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has bolstered the church's ability to share the message of God's love to people who are longing for it. Through your

“More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the Lord! Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore.”

—Psalm 93:4-5

financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices, you've helped carry this message of God's majestic love. Thank you, dear church. As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to stand steadfast in God's promises, sure of God's love and goodness.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



# Immanuel Lutheran of Evanston

**Annual Meeting  
of  
Immanuel Lutheran Church**

2024 Year in Review

IN-PERSON & VIA ZOOM

Evanston, Illinois

January 26, 2025

1:00 p.m.



Annual Meeting of Immanuel Lutheran Church Evanston, Illinois  
January 26, 2025, 1:00 p.m.

## AGENDA

<b>Call to Order and Establishment of Quorum</b>	Michael Kloster, President
<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Pastor Mark Sloss
<b>Adoption of Agenda</b>	
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Budget Proposal 2025 .....	Attached

### Old Business

### New Business

- Adoption of Annual Budget
- Election of the Congregation Council
- Music Endowment Fund Update

### Adjournment, followed by the Lord’s Prayer and Benediction

*The new Congregation Council will meet immediately following adjournment of the congregational meeting to elect officers for the coming year.*

## IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

### Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation, January 28, 2024

*The full version of the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Congregation, January 28, 2024, will be available at a later date.*

Annual Meeting, Sunday, January 28th, 2024

Members present:

Marlene Chatain  
Terri Hummel  
Susan Rose  
Andrea Knohl  
Greg Hummel  
Anne Heider  
Steve Warner  
Nicolai Schoesboe  
Kevin McDaniel  
Sara L. Krentz  
Diane Keely  
Laura J. Stivers  
Christiane Djuric  
Charles Yarnoff  
Terri Simchak  
Joe Simchak  
Bert Mount  
Kit McCarthy  
Dana Barron  
Mark Kearns  
MaryAnn Kearns  
Michael Kloster  
Laura McDaniel  
Pastor Mark Sloss  
Jerry Larson  
Lisa Larson  
Hal Larson  
Grace Yarnoff  
Tom Couch  
Jim Skelton  
Kathy Skelton

Next Meeting: Sunday, Jan 28th, 2024, immediately following the annual meeting. The only business for this meeting will be electing officers.

## Minutes of Congregational Meeting on March 10, 2024

Present: see Appendix A

The meeting was called to order at 12:08 pm by Congregational Council President Michael Kloster.

### **New Business**

The Green Team, Property Committee, and Finance Committee presented a summary of the solar panel project, accompanying roofing repair, and finances (see Appendix B).

- Bert Mount highlighted the environmental and financial benefits, the selection of Ailey Solar as the contractor, and a timeline for the project.
- Jim Skelton provided a summary of the needed roof repairs, which are necessary to complete before the installation of the solar panels. Hanson Roofing has submitted a bid for \$28,250 (see Appendix C). In addition, the northeast corner of Fellowship Hall requires concrete work. The preliminary architectural work for this was done pro bono by a member of the Wilmette Band; bids for the concrete work are still being gathered. The cost for the repairs is approximately \$15,000.
- Treasurer Susan Ross summarized the financial elements of the solar panel projects. The total cost is \$60,000, and there are funds available to cover the cost during the first year. There are \$50,560 in estimated rebates, with the caveat that some of these require a contract in place and others depend on the availability of federal and state funds. They also assume the panels will be operational for 15 years. Susan underscored the time-sensitive nature of some of these rebates. The project's final cost to Immanuel is \$4,300.
- Financial Secretary Laurie Stivers noted that the ~\$43,000 (28,250 + \$15,000) to cover the cost of the roof repair is available but that the funds used will depend on the timing of the payments. This is also an opportunity for members to make additional contributions to Immanuel's capital funds, including the SolarFund.

Motion 1a: Immanuel will proceed with roofing repair by Hanson Roofing for \$28,250. Immanuel will also approve up to \$15,000 in concrete structural repairs prior to the roofing, as the Property Committee anticipates it will be needed.

Motion 1b: Immanuel will proceed with the solar panel installation project as proposed by Ailey Solar at a cost not to exceed \$65,000, with initial funding to be provided by a combination of donations, interest-free loans from members of the congregation, and grants. It is anticipated that Immanuel will receive significant rebates for the installation, so that the estimated overall cost is less than \$10,000. In addition, the solar panels will generate future savings due to lower electric bills. Work on the solar panels will begin after the Fellowship Hall roof is repaired and determined to be structurally sound.

It was MSC<sup>1</sup> to pass Motions 1a and 1b.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:31 pm, with special thanks to the Green Team (Bert Mount, Nicolai Schousboe, Jim McCarthy, Susan Ross, Mark Kraemer).

Respectfully Submitted, Dana  
Barron, Secretary

**Appendix A Congregational Meeting Attendance  
March 10, 2024**

Tom Couch  
Sara Krentz  
Marlene Chatain  
Andrea Knohl  
Keith Knohl  
Kathryn Skelton  
Jim Skelton  
Charles Yarnoff  
Greg Hummel  
Terri Hummel  
Laurie Stivers  
Nicolai Schousboe  
Melanie Anderson  
Diane Keely  
Anne Heider  
Steve Warner  
Dana Barron  
Michael Kloster  
Susan Ross  
Kevin S. McDaniel  
Mark Sloss  
Jim Miller  
Mark Kearns  
Mary Ann Kearns  
Jerry Larson

Appendix B of the summary of the solar panel project by Ailey Solar is included in the pdf version of the Annual Report.












**IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
SOLAR PANELS**



- Project Overview
- Contractor Selection & Qualifications
- Timeline
- Financing
- Mission Focus

# ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS OF PROPOSED SOLAR PANEL SYSTEM

#	Savings in Lifetime of Solar System (25 Years)	
650,000	kWh	
436	Tons of Carbon Eliminated	
53	Cars Taken off the Road	
44,907	Gallons of Gas Saved	
325	Trees Planted Over 25 Years	
59	Homes Powered for One Year	
200,000	Years that Nuclear Waste Storage is Avoided	



## IMMANUEL INSTALLATION

- 23.04 kW system using (48) Hanwha PV modules or equivalent with 480 watts of power each.
- Uses a SE17.3K SolarEdge inverter with a P1101 optimizer mounted beneath each module.
- Estimated annual electric production of this system is 26,000 kilowatt hours.

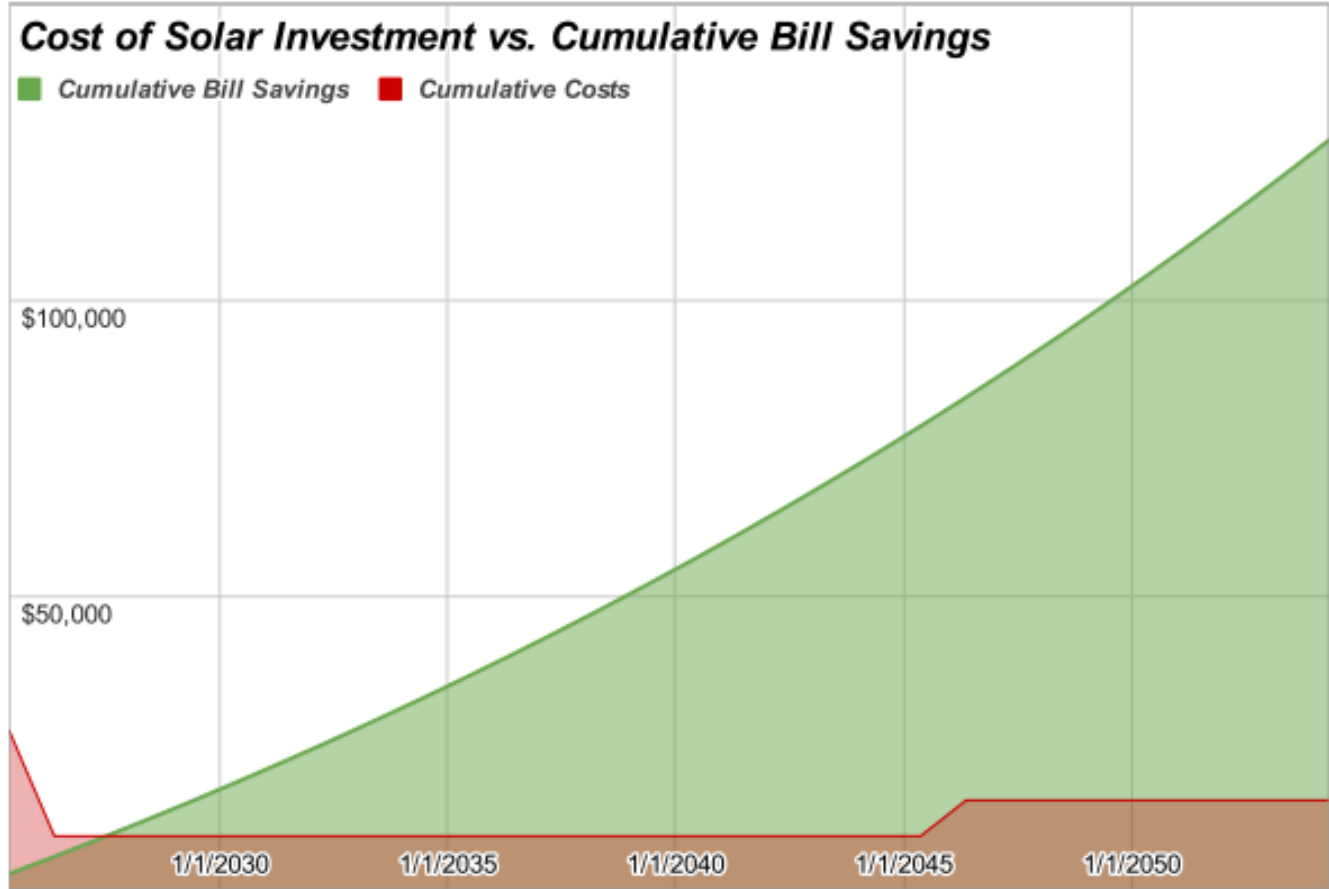
Switching to solar panels is estimated to save \$117,857 over the next 30 years.

# BIRD'S EYE VIEW





# UP-FRONT COSTS ARE OFFSET WITH LARGE SCALE CUMULATIVE SAVINGS





# CONTRACTOR SELECTION

## Ailey Solar

- Detailed proposal
- Reasonable cost
- Recommended by Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Oak Park)

# TIMELINE

- Repair Roof – ASAP
- Sign Contract with Ailey – Dependent on roof repair
- Apply for Permit – After entering into contract
- Begin Installation - may occur within a few months
- Certify Unit Operational - anticipate within a year
- Apply for Rebates – during & after project, anticipate receiving all rebates w/in 2-3 years



# SOLAR PANEL INSTALLATION & ROOF REPAIR

- Solar panel installation requires a structurally sound roof
- Roof in NE Corner of Fellowship Hall requires repair
- Jim Skelton received professional architectural and engineering (A&E) advice
- Hanson Roofing submitted a bid – company is reliable and has worked extensively on Immanuel's roof
- Projected cost is being discussed separately, Jim Skelton can provide additional information



# **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

# SOLAR PANEL PAYMENT SCHEDULE

1	\$	2,500	Due upon contract signature
2	\$	27,451	Due upon submission of Permit to City
3	\$	23,961	Due upon Commencement of Work at Location
4	\$	<u>5,990</u>	Due upon Successful Permit
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>59,902</b>	

TOTAL COST APPROXIMATELY \$60,000

# FUNDS AVAILABLE

\$	15,000	Donations
\$	15,000	Pledge
\$	25,000	Interest free loans from members
\$	<u>5,000</u>	Grant from Faith in Place (could be \$10K)
\$	<b>60,000</b>	<b>Total</b>

TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE APPROXIMATELY \$60,000

# ANTICIPATED REBATES

\$	17,971	Federal IRS Elective Pay
\$	25,677	State SREC
\$	<u>6,912</u>	ComEd
\$	<b>50,560</b>	<b>Total</b>

TOTAL REBATES APPROXIMATELY \$50,000

# REBATES

- Rebates are time sensitive, it's important to start project quickly
  - State funding levels have decreased over time
  - Political climate is uncertain
  - Popularity of solar initiatives places a strain on resources
- Rebates are estimates, depend on system performance
- Some rebates are paid up-front; e.g. if solar panels are not operational for 15 years, a pro-rated portion of rebate would need to be refunded to the State

# PROJECTED FINAL COST

\$ 59,902	Contractor Cost
\$ 50,560	Anticipated Rebates
\$ <u>(5,000)</u>	Anticipated Grant
<b>\$ 4,342</b>	<b>Total</b>

SOLAR PANELS ESTIMATED TO COST IMMANUEL \$4,300

# SOLAR FUND PROJECTED BALANCE FOR FUTURE GREEN PROJECTS

\$ 30,000	Donations
\$ <u>(4,342)</u>	Project Final Cost
<b>\$ 25,658</b>	<b>Total</b>

SOLAR FUND WILL HAVE A BALANCE OF \$25K



# ELECTRIC BILLS

- Current bills are roughly \$350/month, total \$4,100 past 12 months
- Usage has increased with installation of heat/AC in Fellowship Hall
- Usage may increase further with improvements to Sanctuary
- Overall goal is to decrease usage and be good stewards of God's creation, return energy to the grid as much as possible



Immanuel  
Lutheran  
OF EVANSTON

**We worship God. We work for justice.  
We build community.  
We welcome all.**



# SOLAR PANELS ARE AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF IMMANUEL'S MISSION

- Care for God's creation
- Help prevent harm to our neighbors – environmental justice
- Build community by demonstrating our commitment to clean energy
- Serve as a resource for other congregations and community organizations

# IMMANUEL'S GREEN TEAM



Bert Mount

Nicolai Schousboe

Jim McCarthy

Susan Ross

Mark Kraemer

**PROPOSAL**

**HANSON ROOFING, INC.**

ROOFING - GUTTERS  
2130 JACKSON AVENUE  
EVANSTON, IL 60201  
PHONE (847) 328-2550 – FAX (847) 328-3906  
hansonroofing@ameritech.net

**TO** Emmanuel Lutheran Church **DATE** 02-14-2024

Jim Skelton **Kind of Work** Roofing

616 Lake St. **Location** 616 Lake St.

Evanston, Illinois 60202 Evanston, Illinois 60202

**WE PROPOSE to furnish all necessary labor, material and equipment to complete the following:**

Reroof one story east side flat roof with a one ply modified bitumen roof system as follows. Sweep roof clean. Build up low spots and repair defects in existing roof system with modified bitumen membrane. Reroof entire prepared surface with CertainTeed STA modified bitumen membrane. All sheets will be installed as per manufacturer’s installation instructions. All sheets will wrap up parapet walls and be counter flashed with additional one ply membrane. Top of all counter flashings will have an aluminum termination bar mechanically fastened into mortar line and caulked with the urethane sealant. All vents, stacks, equipment stands, roof drains, through wall drains and gutter edges will be flashed and counter flashed with one ply membrane. Existing conductor boxes at north east and northwest corners of flat roof will be repaired or replaced as needed. New roof surface will then be coated with fibrated aluminum. New roof guaranteed on labor for five years with a 15 year manufacturer’s warranty on materials.

\$28,250.00

**Carpentry repairs needed to wood sheeting will be done at time and material, at the rate of \$105.00 per man hour plus material cost. Additional sheetmetal or finish carpentry work necessary will be done on time and material at the rate of \$105.00 per man hour plus material cost. Owner is responsible for stucco/siding repairs at roof to wall intersections.**

**If this is acceptable to you, please sign one copy and return to us.**

**All the above work is to be completed in a substantial and workman like manner. Price subject to change after 30 days.**

**Terms: 30% Down-Balance on Completion. We accept Visa / Master Card up to \$10,000.**

**Our workmen are covered by Workers Compensation and General Liability Insurance.**

IL Licensed Roofing Contractor No. 104-000850 See reverse side for additional provisions, which are part of this proposal.

**ACCEPTANCE OF PROPOSAL-By signing, dating and returning of this proposal, you accept the prices, specifications and conditions, and authorize HANSON ROOFING, INC. to perform the work as proposed under the conditions stated.**

By \_\_\_\_\_

**HANSON ROOFING, INC.**

Appendix C

**Approximate Starting Date 2-4 Weeks Weather Permitting**

**By**

\_\_\_\_\_

Charles S. Neuhaus

## Minutes of Congregational Meeting on September 1, 2024

Present: see Appendix A

The meeting was called to order at 12:12 pm by Congregational Council President Michael Kloster with a reminder of Immanuel's four pillars.

The congregation joined together in a proclaiming welcome: This beautiful building God has entrusted to us is part of how we demonstrate our love for God and our love for our neighbor, and is a tool for inviting and welcoming others into a life of faith.

### **New Business**

#### Cornice Repair Cost Approval

Background: At the Congregational meeting on March 10, 2024, the congregation approved up to \$15,000 for the concrete structural repairs. Per the project manager, Jon Stricker, the damage to the wooden planks was more extensive than originally assessed. The additional cost to complete the repairs is not known at this time, but Tom Steele from Quality Restorations has provided a quote of not-to-exceed \$25,000. Immanuel's Constitution stipulates that the congregation must approve expenditures greater than 2% of the annual budget. The difference between the initial approval and revised cost estimate is greater than 2%.

Since the work was in progress and the guts of the church were exposed to the elements, and a delay would cascade to affect the timelines of the roofing, solar, and AC projects, the Council agreed to authorize the increase in repairs on an emergency basis and present it to the congregation at a special meeting.

Three donors came forward to pledge a total of \$12,000 to assist in covering the additional costs. We originally approved \$15,000 and received an additional \$12,000 of directed donations. This means even if the repairs required the full \$25,000, there would be no net budget impact compared to what we approved.

The repair work was completed on August 14th, and it finished curing by August 21st.

It was MSC<sup>1</sup> to pass the motion to approve additional costs not to exceed \$25,000 to complete the cornice repair.

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<sup>1</sup> Moved, seconded, carried.

#### Updates from Council

The congregation received a brief update on the Council's business and visioning work for the year:

- Music Endowment
- Air Conditioning for Sanctuary

- Solar Project
- Green Team
- Café Immanuel
- Pride Month
- Interfaith Festival

The meeting was adjourned at 12:29 pm. Respectfully

Submitted,  
Dana Barron, Secretary

### **Appendix A Congregational Meeting Attendance September 1, 2024**

Mark Sloss  
Michael Kloster  
Nicolai Schousboe  
Greg Hummel  
Terri Hummel  
Laurie Stivers  
Andrea Knohl  
Keith Knohl  
Kevin McDaniel  
Terri Simchak Joe  
Simchak  
Charles Yarnoff  
Susan Ross  
Kit McCarthy  
Judy Kratochvil  
Bertha Mount  
Anne Heider  
R. Stephen Warner  
Maren Baylaender  
Laura McDaniel  
Christiane Djuric  
Diane Keely  
Kathryn Skelton  
Jim Skelton  
Dana Barron



## REPORT OF THE PASTOR FOR 2024

I continue to be so impressed with the many way that Immanuel participates in God's work of reconciling the world: assembling kitchen kits for immigrants seeking amnesty, quilt ministry for Lutheran World relief, hosting the indoor winter market, our Organ Scholar program, offering shelter to the homeless, being a reconciling in Christ congregation that welcomes and celebrates our LGBTQI+ siblings. In so many various ways Immanuel congregation's light shines bright.

There were many highlights for me this year. Our Pride Sunday was accented with 40-50 voices from the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus and a message from Corbie Treadwell. We put a solar array on our Fellowship Hall roof, following a repair and re-roofing. A generous gift to our Music Outreach Endowment has provided us with the means to keep our sanctuary at a more consistent temperature, a great benefit to the functioning of our organ, and a more comfortable worship space every season. Thanks to Audrey Moy we had some guest speakers at our coffee hour to keep us learning and growing in racial justice. Both our Easter and Christmas worships were very well attended, and our worship and music ministry continue in both excellence and inspiration. Accolades to Jimmy Morehead and Christine Kraemer for the excellent ways that they utilize their musical gifts and leadership in worship.

This is the second year of a new leadership team in hosting the winter Farmers market, and we have a slew of new vendors, plus our number of shoppers has grown as well. We continue to host many outside groups in our building. From Ernesto crafting salsa in our kitchen, the Wilmette band rehearsals, New Community Church, a variety of parties, GO tournaments, Food Anonymous, plus a variety of other groups and individuals. Our facilities get a lot of use throughout the week. It does my heart good to see the quilting studio in action providing a venue for fellowship while engaged in a worthwhile mission. Many quilting participants are outside our membership rolls. Once again this year we're running three spiritual direction groups, and I'm blessed for Kit McCarthy's partnership in facilitating this sacred ministry.

I look forward each week to Tuesday Bible Study and the Sunday morning 'Feeding Our Faith' discussion classes. We have some committed regular attenders with whom I'm blessed to join in sharing our faith journeys. It's also been a joy to participate with St. Johns and Grace congregations in a confirmation program. This is the third year that we've done this together, and I look forward to having some youth confirmed in worship this coming year.

Our congregation keeps running smoothly thanks to our parish administrator, Jane Kaihatsu. She excels at juggling the many moving parts of her position, and fields a multitude of questions and inquiries like a star shortstop for the White Sox (she's a southside fan). Plus, she excels at publicizing events through our monthly newsletter and weekly email, updating our website and Facebook page, thus keeping us all informed of what's happening. I'm blessed to have such a capable person running our office.

I'm also very impressed by the way that the people of Immanuel congregation continue to embody and live out our 4 pillars. I continue to be deeply grateful to serve as pastor to such a Christ centered, welcoming, and caring faith community. I look forward to discovering together how God's light will shine through us in 2025 and beyond.

Respectfully In Christ,.

Respectfully,

*Pastor Mark*

## Parochial Report—Membership

	<u>Baptized</u>	<u>Confirmed</u>
<b>Membership at end of 2023</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>99</b>
<b>Members Received during 2024</b>		
<i><u>By baptism</u></i>		
Adult:	0	0
Child:	0	0
<i><u>By transfer or affirmation of faith</u></i>		
	4	0
<i><u>Youth confirmed this year</u></i>		
	0	0
<b>Total Members Received</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Members Removed during 2024</b>		
<i><u>By death</u></i>		
	0	0
<i><u>For other reasons</u></i>		
	0	0
<i><u>By statistical adjustment</u></i>		
	0	0
<b>Total Members Removed</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Total Membership at end of 2024*</b>	<b>120*</b>	<b>103</b>

*(\*Baptized membership includes 6 associate members.)*

### **Christian Education:**

Number of children in Sunday School (Pre-K–6<sup>th</sup> grade): 2

Number of youth in Confirmation Class: 4

Average attendance at Tuesday Adult Spiritual Formation: 4

Average attendance at Sunday Feeding Our Faith: 6



- **Music Ministry:** Efforts to expand the Music Outreach Endowment Fund continued, with new donors showing interest in supporting our talented music staff. Plans for a new concert series and collaborations with local universities are under discussion.
- **Farmer's Market:** The Winter Farmer's Market remained a vital part of our outreach efforts. The Council explored ways to enhance the market's impact, including justice-related themes and increased marketing efforts.
- **Justice Ministries:** Immanuel continued its commitment to social justice by participating in various initiatives, including becoming a collection point for migrant assistance and hosting a series of racial justice learning talks.
- **Community Engagement:** Events such as the fall congregational picnic and the Carols & Cocoa event brought members and visitors together in meaningful ways.

### **Stewardship and Financial Health**

The financial stewardship of the church was a focal point for the Council in 2024. Notable developments include:

- **Giving Trends:** While the church faced a \$90,000 budget deficit, the stewardship campaign resulted in an increase of \$17,000 in pledges from 13 giving units and the addition of two new pledging units.
- **Planned Giving and Endowments:** A new focus was placed on planned giving, with initiatives to educate members on legacy gifts. The Music Endowment Fund continued to attract interest from donors.
- **Building Use:** Revenue from building use exceeded expectations; however, improvements in rental pricing and collection practices were identified as key areas for growth.

### **Property and Facility Improvements**

The Council undertook significant property improvements in 2024 to ensure the safety and usability of the church facilities, including:

- **Solar Panel Installation:** The solar project, funded partially by member loans and grants, progressed with the goal of reducing utility costs and environmental impact.
- **Sanctuary Air Conditioning:** The Council approved investments to install energy-efficient air conditioning to improve the comfort of worshippers during warmer months.
- **Repairs and Maintenance:** Major repairs were completed on the church's roof and structural components, including the northeast scupper and cornice. Unexpected costs were covered through emergency Council action and congregation-approved funding.

### **Visioning and Future Planning**

2024 was a year of forward-thinking and strategic planning. The Council engaged in visioning sessions to focus on four key areas:

1. **Building Use Expansion** – Maximizing rental income potential while maintaining community engagement.

2. **Membership Growth** – Balancing evangelism efforts with a focus on serving the congregation’s spiritual needs.
3. **Financial Sustainability** – Long-term planning to close budget gaps and enhance stewardship.
4. **Justice and Outreach Ministries** – Deepening our commitment to social justice and environmental stewardship through initiatives such as the Green Team and climate justice workshops.

### **Appreciation and Looking Ahead**

The Council thanks all members of Immanuel for their faithfulness and contributions throughout the year. As we look to 2025, we remain committed to financial sustainability, vibrant ministry offerings, and continued community engagement. With God's guidance, we will continue to build a welcoming and thriving church community.

**Respectfully submitted,**

*Immanuel Lutheran Church Congregation Council*

## **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

### **REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE 2024**

The Nominating Committee, consisting of Dana Barron (chair), Greg Hummel, Jerry Larson, and Nicolai Schousboe, presents the following slate of candidates for Council to be elected at the 2025 Annual Meeting:

- Michael Kloster, nominated for a second three-year term
- Jerry Larson, nominated for a second three-year term
- Laura McDaniel, nominated for a three-year term.

### **REPORT OF THE JUSTICE & EQUITY COMMITTEE 2024**

In 2024, ILC featured a series of impactful presentations aimed at fostering understanding and advocacy for social justice.

In June, Van Gilmer, Musical Director at the Baha'i House of Worship, a former engineer and a renowned civil rights activist, shared his powerful experiences growing up as an African American in the South. His presentation included moving stories and songs, drawing from his history as one of the original college students who participated in the Woolworth's lunch counter sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina.

Executive Director of the Shorefront Legacy Center, Laurice Bell presented "Evanston: My Home, Our Story," in August. She highlighted the vital role of the Legacy Center in preserving the history and contributions of Black residents in the North Shore area, serving as both a tribute and a resource for community engagement and historical education.

In October, educator and justice advocate, Cindy Fey presented "Whiteness is a Culture: Working at Allyship." She shared her personal story and revealed how privilege shaped her life and how she uses her platform as co-leader of ABC Book Club, which is part of Healing Everyday Racism in Our Schools (HEROS) grassroots community action group in Wilmette to advocate for equity and justice for all.

Lastly, in November, Todd Maxman, a historian and educator at New Trier High School, emphasized his advocacy for justice within the classes he teaches, and the programs he has developed. He also shared his personal stories on race as someone who grew up in Evanston. He is dedicated to empowering his students and promoting awareness of social issues.

These presentations collectively fostered dialogue, reflection, and action within our community, highlighting the importance of understanding our shared history and commitment to social justice.

Respectfully submitted,  
Audrey Moy

### **REPORT FROM THE SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS 2024**

Immanuel's Sunday School continues to meet every other week during the academic year. We take the summer off from classes, meeting to serve a summer coffee hour.

We have 2 students. One is in kindergarten and the other is in second grade.

During Advent, the children selected items from the ECLA Good Gifts catalog to share through the ELCA program. Ask them what they selected! Also during Advent, they had the opportunity to light the Advent wreath.

Because of Child Safety protocol, Kit McCarthy, Jim McCarthy, or Bert Mount take turns attending Sunday School so there are always 2 adults in the room. Many thanks to these folks for their support and help with our Sunday School program.

We continue to use the lectionary-based lessons which means that what we cover is also part of the readings for the church service that day.

Yours in Christ,  
Laurie Stivers

### **REPORT OF THE MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE 2024**

The Mutual Ministry Committee met bi-monthly during 2024. Members were Pastor Mark Sloss, Mark Kearns, Grace Yarnoff, and Kit McCarthy. The goal of this committee is to support the mission of the Immanuel congregation through our shared reflections on the past, the current state of our ministry, and our vision for the future. The committee provided opportunities for members of the committee to build deeper bonds with one another and to reflect on the needs of the Immanuel community and how to further its mission.

As an outgoing member of this committee, it has been a privilege to serve. The committee welcomes Diane Keeley as she begins her time as a Mutual Ministry Committee member.

Submitted by  
Kit McCarthy

### **REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE 2023**

In November, the personnel committee met with the employees of Immanuel Lutheran Christine Kraemer, Jane Kaihatsu, Jimmy Morehead and Pastor Mark to conduct an annual review, discuss their roles within the church, and their recommendations for improvements.

No major issues were brought to our attention and all said they were generally pleased with how things were going. Some areas were discussed related to items that could improve Immanuel and/or where their jobs could be enhanced. These specifics were addressed.

Thank you,  
Andrea Knohl

### **PROPERTY COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHTS 2024**

In late 2023 the council approved moving forward with the solar panel project. Before the solar panels could be placed on Fellowship Hall roof, it was determined that the leak in the NE corner needed to be fixed and after Hanson Roofing assessed the roof, it was determined that a new roof covering was needed.

- Quality Restoration completed the NE corner leak on 6/17/24

- Hanson Roofing completed the new roof on Fellowship Hall on 9/15/24.
- Ailey Solar completed the solar panel installation on 10/20/24.
- The Green team was formed to complete this project:

Thanks to Bert Mount, Mark Kramer, Susan Ross, Craig Williams, Nicolai Schousboe, Jim Skelton, and Jim McCarthy for shepherding this project.

The council also approved the installation of the heating/air conditioning system for the sanctuary, similar to what was installed in fellowship hall. The system is being installed by Flader and consists of the following:

The North and South sides of the sanctuary are identical, each side has the following:

- 3 wall mounted air handlers
- 1 floor mounted air handler in the choir loft
- 1 heat exchanger on the NW corner of Fellowship Hall roof.
- 

However, each side is separately powered and thermostatically controlled. This project is currently in process and is expected to be completed by the end of January 2025.

The property committee welcomes a new member, Craig Williams. Craig has done some wonderful things around the church, including:

- Fixing the timer on the church sign so it lights up at night.
- Fixing the outdoor lights over all the exterior doors and fixed the timers on those lights.
- Cleaned and organized, the closets throughout the church.
- Fixed the broken light covers.
- Washed the windows in Fellowship hall both inside and out.
- Cleaned the youth room.

Work needed to be completed in 2025

- New refrigerator
- Replace ceiling tiles in Fellowship Hall, hallway, and Pastor's Office,
- Add an additional Ring doorbell to the door outside of the Church Office and install additional cameras.
- Fixing and painting the wall in the Game Room
- Sealing and restriping the parking lot.
- Repair the broken cabinetry in the kitchen.

Committee members: Jim McCarthy, Jim Skelton, Craig Williams, Sara Mauk

## **REPORT OF THE SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE 2024**

### **God's Work Our Hands 2024: Summary for Annual Report (Charly Yarnoff)**

Members of Immanuel joined hands with our sisters and brothers at Grace, St. Paul's, and St. Timothy's Lutheran Churches on September 8th to serve our community. Donations of food, clothing, toiletries, and kitchenware were received and sorted for people served by Interfaith Action of Evanston, Grace Lutheran Little Free Pantry, Connections for the Homeless, and Refugee Community Connection. People also went out to help clean and stock Evanston's four community fridges and to clean and do maintenance at Lutheran Campus Ministry of Northwestern University prior to students' arrival for the upcoming academic year. Prior to our service projects, we all joined in prayer and song, and our hands were blessed by Pastor Mark and worship leaders from the other congregations. Seeing the work of so many hands in service of our community was inspiring!



### **Purple Pantry Drive 2024**

At the Indoor Farmer's Market on March 2nd, Immanuel sponsored a drive to collect food and personal care items for Northwestern University's Purple Pantry. We were joined by students from Northwestern's Lutheran Campus Ministry. Several bagsful of items were collected and delivered to the Purple Pantry.

According to a 2023 article in the journal *Public Health*, one-third of all college students in the U.S. experience food insecurity--"inconsistent access to enough food to meet basic needs"--because of lack of money or other resources. This rate is greater than the national average for all households. Northwestern University's Purple Pantry addresses this problem by providing food and other essential items to students.

### **Donation Collection Site**

In February of 2024, Immanuel started collecting cooking items and assembly "kitchen kits" for newly housed migrants in the Chicago area. These kits provided basic cooking and eating supplies meant as a start to getting settled in a new home.

Collection of items and assembly of kits happened on Thursday mornings, 9am-noon. In addition to donated items, dishes donated many years ago by Wikstrom catering that had been sitting in a Fellowship Hall closet were used and given a new purpose. No official count was kept, but I estimate that over 200 kitchen kits were assembled by the time we ended collections in mid-November of 2024. At this time, there are no plans to resume any type of donation collections.

Thank you to everyone who supported this ministry by donating things of your own, purchasing items, staffing a donation time, assembling kitchen kits, praying, or all the above. Your willingness to open our doors to this effort is a witness of God's love and care to a hurting world.

In peace,  
Christiane Djuric

### **Emergency Overnight Shelter (Steve Warner/Nicolai Schousboe)**

At 2:00 pm Sunday, April 14 2024 Immanuel opened its doors to receive cots and eqpt. to welcome guests to the Emergency Overnight Shelter. This setup inaugurates our annual participation in a ministry offered through Interfaith Action of Evanston for more than a decade. The other institutions involved were St Paul's Lutheran, Beth Emet--The Free Synagogue, Unitarian Church of Evanston, First United Methodist, First Congregational, First Presbyterian, Lake Street Church, and St. Luke's Episcopal. Immanuel is located squarely in the middle of this institutional cluster.

Starting at 8:15 pm, our volunteers assisted IA's paid staff members to set up cots, put up signs, and ready the supply of blankets and sheets distributed to guests, show them where the restrooms are, and direct them to the sleeping rooms, men to the Sunday school room (used for the Farmers Market), and women to the Nursery room (across from the choir room).

Lights are turned off at 10:00 pm. Guests are awakened at 6:00 am the following morning. The tasks in the morning are to see to it that guests are ready to leave by 6:45 am, stuff the used blankets and sheets into laundry bags, put the full laundry bags outside to be picked up, disinfect the cots, take down the temporary signs, and pick up debris.

There are three shifts every night: Set-up, from 8:30 to 10:00 pm; Overnight, from 9:30 pm to 7:00 am; and clean-up, from 6:00 to 7:00 am. On the first night, two volunteers will be needed for Set-up, to assemble

the costs for the first time, and they should probably arrive by 8:15 pm. After that first night, the shifts will be routine and only one volunteer is needed for each shift.

It's important for volunteers to be courteous to guests, compassionate but firm in following the rules, and not to offer rides, money, or other favors to any guest.

Please consider joining Immanuel's volunteer corps. Thank you for all your help.

Yours in Christ,  
Nicolai Schousboe, Chair of the Social Ministry committee

## **REPORT OF THE QUILTING MINISTRY 2024**

The Immanuel quilters meet twice monthly on Thursday morning and during the indoor farmers market to assemble, sew and tie quilts. In February 2024, the congregation blessed 209 quilts and 8 baby layette kits which were then boxed up and taken to a warehouse in Elgin, IL. From the Elgin warehouse they are shipped to a larger warehouse in Maryland where they are prepped for distribution throughout the world.

We are blessed to have continual donations of fabric and bed sheets for this ministry. We purchase batting for the inner sandwich of the quilts and that, too, is made possible by generous donations to the "social ministry - special" fund.

The quilters continue to assemble quilts at Immanuel's indoor farmers market. Being present at the market to share this ministry with the Evanston community not only brings more fabric and bed sheet donations but also more quilters! When quilters share information about this ministry with market customers who wander into the quilt studio to see what is going on we always end the info with an invitation to join in the fun.

Quilts finished since February of 2024 will be displayed in the sanctuary for the March 15, 2025, farmers market and blessed during the service on March 16, 2025. Invitations to "see - touch - bless" the finished quilts is a wonderful way to share this ministry and our worship service with others.

In Christ,  
Christiane Djuric

## **STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2024**

The 2024 Stewardship Committee consisted of Michael Kloster (chair), Pastor Mark, Dana Barron, Terri Simchak, Tom Couch, Gregory Hummel, Anne Heider, and Kathryn Skelton.

The theme of the 2024 Stewardship Campaign: *illuminating our gratitude with generosity*.  
Temple talks were given by: Michael Kloster, Mark Kraemer, and Susan Ross.

Immanuel once again stepped up and put living out of God's abundance into practice. Of the pledges received, at least 13 indicated an increase over previous years' giving. We also received 2 new pledges in 2024, compared to the previous year. Receipt of the pledges is a major goal of the stewardship committee for the benefit of the budget planning process.

In last year's annual report, I mentioned the idea of a matching donation or other incentives to encourage turning in pledge cards. Although we didn't implement that this year, I believe it would still be a good idea for future stewardship campaigns. The net effect on total pledges puts us above past years, which demonstrates the major success of the stewardship campaign and a strong show of support from the Immanuel congregation.

Thank you to the whole congregation, each of whom contributes their talents as well as their financial support as they are able. I am truly inspired by your commitment to serving this community and shining the light of the Lord for the world to see.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael Kloster, Council liaison to Stewardship Committee

## **WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2024**

In 2024 the Worship & Music Committee planned and led worship, including introducing new music from the *All Creation Sings* hymnal supplement. A few highlights include celebrating Pride in June with a lovely visit from the Chicago Gay Men's Chorus and collaborative services for Reformation and Pentecost with other local congregations.

Regular committee members included Greg Hummel, Christine Kraemer, Sara Krentz, Hal Larson, Melisa Larson, Kit McCarthy, Jimmy Morehead, Pastor Mark Sloss, and Kathryn Skelton.

There are as always, a number of volunteers to thank for their able leadership. Tom Couch and Kevin McDaniel have continued to work with technology, getting us online every service, with occasional assistance from Michael Kloster. Nicolai Schousboe leads the ushers. Kit McCarthy scheduled worship leaders, led Altar Guild, and trained new volunteers.

Christine Kraemer is in her third year as the organist for regular Sunday worship. Jimmy Morehead finished his 7th full year as choir director, planning worship with Pastor Mark.

Kit coordinated the replacement of communion kneelers with beautiful new fabric and new cushions. Near the end of the year we returned to kneeling for communion. We continue to recognize and welcome those who are joining on Zoom or who might prefer to take communion in their seats by offering packets and holding time for distribution of those elements.

We held Organ Scholar auditions in February 2024. The graduate student winner was Hansol Kim, a student at Indiana University, who presented a concert in November. The undergraduate was Trevor Good, a student at the University of Kansas, whose concert was in October. Both of these were also broadcast on Zoom, and our website has YouTube recordings available.

Immanuel's worship life is enriched and supported by the work of others not on the Worship & Music Committee who offer their time and talents as Assisting Ministers, Communing Ministers, Lectors, Ushers, Readers, Altar Guild Servers, Choir members, bread bakers, Zoom hosts, and of course those who join in the worshipping Assembly, both in person and in our Zoom community. We are very glad to see everyone who attends, whether that be in person or online.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sara Krentz, Committee Chairperson

## **REPORTS OF SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

### **MEMORIAL FUND COMMITTEE REPORT 2024**

No memorial gifts were received in 2024.

\$1,039.12 was spent from the Memorials Fund for the purchase of new altar kneelers.

Respectfully submitted,

Marlene Chatain, Chair

Committee Members: Marlene Chatain, Anne Heider, Elizabeth Stegner

### **REPORT OF THE STARK FUND COMMITTEE FOR 2024**

By action of Financial Secretary Laurie Stivers during the year, \$200 was returned to the Stark Fund, representing funds unspent from a failed disbursement to the Bethel Imani SAWC (Synod Authorized Worshipping Community) in 2021; these funds were added to the \$1000 set aside for Fall 2024.

Bequests from the Stark Fund for 2024 were:

February 2024: Lutheran World Relief for Ukraine: \$500

March 2024: Pilsen Food Pantry to benefit local asylum seekers: \$500

October 2024: Lutheran World Relief in North Carolina for rebuilding after Hurricane Helene: \$600

October 2024: Refugee One (a partner with ELCA's Metropolitan Synod) for support of Refugees and Asylum Applicants in Metropolitan Chicago: \$600

for a total of \$2200

Serving on the Stark Committee this year were Sara Krentz, Jim Miller, Jim Rakowsky, Nicolai Schousboe, Joe Simchak, Steve Warner (chair) and Pr. Mark Sloss (ex officio).

Diane Keeley, outgoing chair, and Glynis Kloster completed their terms at the beginning of the year, after making sure that I, as incoming chair, knew the ropes. Another veteran member, Jim Rakowsky, completed his service at the end of the year.

Continuing members for 2025 are Sara Krentz, Jim Miller, Nicolai Schousboe, Joe Simchak, and Steve Warner (chair)

Steve Warner

Stark Committee Chair

## **REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR 2024**

Committee Members: Susan Ross, Laurie Stivers, Sara Krentz, Hal Larson, Steve Andes, Mary Ann Kearns, Greg Hummel-Council Liaison

Immanuel has been facing difficult years with budget deficits. We have lost some members, so our member-giving has gone down slightly since a year ago. However, our Use of Facilities line item has increased as more groups are renting space in Immanuel for various events. Overall, we were slightly over budgeted income and \$15,000 under budgeted expenses so our loss for the year was \$71,740 instead of the loss we had thought we might have of over \$90,000.

On a brighter note, we have continued to plan for the future. The Council and congregation approved the roof repair and solar panel project which should be a help for cost and energy savings as we move into 2025. Immanuel members have given gifts of \$37,500 for the panels and other members have given us no-interest loans of \$32,500. We will pay back the loans when we receive the solar panel rebates by selling back our excess energy from the panels. The air-conditioning and improved heating in the sanctuary will make our facility more attractive for groups to rent or to share with Immanuel.

The Finance Committee restructured our invested accounts to try to get a better return on our investments with less cost to Immanuel. Those funds are being drawn down for cash flow in the checking account and will continue to be used with budget deficits so that we can maintain our church ministries. Special thanks to all of our members and friends who have continued to support Immanuel with your gifts and prayers!

Yours in Christ,  
Mary Ann Kearns, Finance Chair

# Immanuel Lutheran Church

## Budget Proposal 2025

	2024 Actual vs. Budget			2025
	Actual	Budget	over (under) Budget	Proposed 2025
<b>Revenue</b>				
<b>OFFERINGS</b>				
Envelope Offering	187,547	189,665	(2,118)	187,000
Cost of Stock & online gifts	(363)	(600)	237	(362)
<b>Total Envelope Offering</b>	<b>187,185</b>	<b>189,065</b>	<b>(1,881)</b>	<b>186,638</b>
Open Offering	1,488	4,000	(2,512)	1,500
<b>Total OFFERINGS</b>	<b>188,672</b>	<b>193,065</b>	<b>(4,393)</b>	<b>188,138</b>
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>				
Dividend Income	33	65	(32)	0
Misc.	1,291	125	1,166	0
Thrivent Choice	183	60	123	60
Use of Facilities Donation	13,756	8,500	5,256	20,000
<b>Total OTHER INCOME</b>	<b>15,263</b>	<b>8,750</b>	<b>6,513</b>	<b>20,060</b>
<b>SPECIAL OFFERINGS</b>				
Ash Wednesday	221	20	201	
Christmas	750	200	550	
Easter	491	110	381	
Good Friday	0	20	(20)	
Initial	18	15	3	
Maundy Thursday	25	20	5	
Mid-Week Lenten Evening	20	20	0	
<b>Total SPECIAL OFFERINGS</b>	<b>1,525</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>1,120</b>	<b>1,225</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>205,461</b>	<b>202,220</b>	<b>3,241</b>	<b>209,423</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>				
<b>MISSION - BUILDING AND FACIL</b>				
Cleaning Service	6,160	7,150	(990)	7,000
Electric	4,192	4,000	192	4,000
Gas	5,540	6,500	(960)	6,000
Insurance	8,877	8,150	727	11,392
Maintenance	12,989	12,000	989	14,000
Maintenance contracts	7,004	7,000	4	7,000
Maintenance Supplies	1,282	600	682	1,300
Snow Removal	965	4,000	(3,035)	2,500
Trash Removal	857	820	37	875
Water	798	1,050	(252)	950
<b>Total MISSION - BUILDING AND FACIL</b>	<b>48,664</b>	<b>51,270</b>	<b>(2,606)</b>	<b>55,017</b>

	2024 Actual vs. Budget			2025
	Actual	Budget	over (under) Budget	Proposed 2025
<b>MISSION - WORLD/COMMUNITY</b>				
Chicago Coalition of Welcoming Churches	250	250	0	250
ELCA & Metro Chicago Synod	17,040	17,040	0	17,040
Interfaith Action Council	1,200	1,200	0	1,200
Reconciling Works			0	250
Interfaith Family Pride Festival			0	500
Warming Center	0	200	(200)	0
<b>Total MISSION - WORLD/COMMUNITY</b>	<b>18,490</b>	<b>18,690</b>	<b>(200)</b>	<b>18,490</b>
<b>MISSION - WORSHIP/FELLOWSHIP</b>				
<b>Other Worship/Office Expenses</b>				
Background checks	0	50	(50)	25
Computer Services	1,219	875	344	1,200
Credit Card/Bank fees	98	75	23	100
Evangelism	0	800	(800)	800
Fellowship	100	500	(400)	500
Food Ministry	0	500	(500)	0
Misc. Expenses	201	200	1	200
Music & Care/Worship Supplies	4,412	7,000	(2,588)	7,000
Office Supplies and equipment	3,264	7,200	(3,936)	7,000
Postage	234	500	(267)	400
Soc Min (includes Anti-Racism Task Force)	500	750	(250)	750
Stewardship	192	200	(8)	200
Sunday School Materials & Progr	258	650	(392)	500
Synod Meeting Expense	750	600	150	750
Technology Expense	1,698	1,900	(202)	1,900
Telephone	6,964	6,250	714	7,800
Youth Ministry	500	0	500	500
<b>Total Other Worship/Office Expenses</b>	<b>20,390</b>	<b>28,050</b>	<b>(7,660)</b>	<b>29,625</b>
<b>Salaries - IRS Account</b>				
Director of Music	21,199	21,199	0	22,047
Housing Allowance	36,000	36,000	0	37,440
Organist	16,296	16,146	150	16,792
Parish Administrator	19,126	19,126	(0)	20,500
Pastor	42,472	42,472	0	44,171
Pastor's Disability	510	510	(0)	255
Pastor's FICA	6,462	6,462	0	6,721
Social Security - Other Staff	4,343	4,320	23	4,884
<b>Total Salaries - IRS Account</b>	<b>146,408</b>	<b>146,235</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>152,809</b>
<b>Salaries - Other</b>				

	2024 Actual vs. Budget			2025
	Actual	Budget	over (under) Budget	Proposed 2025
Car Allowance	355	750	(395)	750
Health & Life Insurance	28,792	32,020	(3,228)	23,054
Health Savings Account - Pastor	1,500	1,800	(300)	750
Pension - Pastor	8,493	8,493	0	8,833
Prof Allowance - Dir of Music	0	250	(250)	250
Professional Allowance - Pastor	350	750	(400)	750
Vacation	1,874	3,825	(1,951)	3,978
Worker's Comp Insurance	1,886	750	1,136	1,272
<b>Total Salaries - Other</b>	<b>43,250</b>	<b>48,638</b>	<b>(5,388)</b>	<b>39,636</b>
<b>Total MISSION - WORSHIP/FELLOWSHIP</b>	<b>210,048</b>	<b>222,923</b>	<b>(12,875)</b>	<b>222,070</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>277,202</b>	<b>292,883</b>	<b>(15,681)</b>	<b>295,577</b>
<b>Net Operating Revenue</b>	<b>(71,913)</b>	<b>(90,663)</b>	<b>18,750</b>	<b>(86,154)</b>



# ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

## OPENING LITURGY

Confident in God's generosity and gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us praise God and give thanks ...

God, we praise you and give you thanks.

**You are good, and your mercy endures forever.**

You gave us a garden with good food to eat.

**We praise you for food that nourishes us.**

You rescued your people from slavery.

**We praise you for freedom.**

You gave us prophets to correct, rebuke and encourage us.

**We bless you for your justice and mercy.**

You gave us your Son, Jesus, to love, redeem and save us.

**We praise you for his death and resurrection.**

You gave us your Holy Spirit to be our Advocate and Comforter.

**We bless you for the gifts of every tribe and nation.**

Strengthen your church with every spiritual gift

**and commission us again to be your servant people.**

Multiply in us the fruit of the spirit:

**love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.**

Send us in your love and mercy,

**that the world may know you and praise you.**

### Now Thank We All Our God



1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,  
2 Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,  
3 All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,



who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;  
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,  
the Son, and Spirit blest, who reign in highest heaven,



who, from our mothers' arms, has blest us on our way  
and keep us all in grace, and guide us when perplexed,  
the one eternal God, whom earth and heav'n adore;



with countless gifts of love, and still is ours to day,  
and free us from all harm in this world and the next.  
for thus it was, is now, and shall be ever - more.

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 840*

Text: Martin Rinkhart, 1586-1649; tr. Cathering Winkworth, 1827-1878

Music: NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT, Johann Crüger, 1598-1662

Let us pray.

Gracious God, you are the giver of every good gift. Bless us with all that we need for ministry in your name, that we might be a blessing to others. In the name of the one who broke bread and fed the multitudes, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**

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](https://LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA).



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America