



2023 Annual Report



Senior Pastor's Report

Pastor Kendall Koenig, Senior Pastor

2023 was a strong year for Light of Christ as we continued to move forward from the disruption of the pandemic and more fully living out our mission and living into our amazing new space. God keeps leading us in and through the opportunities and challenges that arise. This year was another testimony to His faithfulness!

In the following pages of this annual report, you can read about the important ministry LOC was a part of this past year - gathering for worship, connecting and discipling children, youth, and adults, and serving powerfully in the community. So much great work by so many wonderful staff and amazing lay leaders! And I am blessed to have a pastoral partner like Pastor Mo with her many gifts. I am so grateful for the way you as the people of LOC continue to live out our mission to Invite, Nurture, and Serve with such passion.

Here are some other highlights from the year that may not be captured by those individual ministry areas...

- 1) Our teams of Care callers continued to reach out to people in the congregation who have expressed prayer needs or who hadn't been able to connect in worship for a while. Kindness and care were shared!
- 2) We hosted an Artisan Faire, welcoming the community into our space, raising funds for Kids in Need in McHenry County, and for our ASP mission trip.
- 3) We celebrated Bonnie's almost 25 years of ministry among us in May and welcomed Yvette Butler into that important role of Director of Adult and Serving Ministry.
- 4) We dedicated our Memorial Garden as a beautiful place for people to pray and reflect and where the ashes of the saints can be interred until Christ's return.
- 5) Our Endowment Team launched the first Estate Planning workshop in November, as the Council has agreed to provide Philanthrocorp's estate planning services to everyone in the congregation.
- 6) We baptized 31 children, youth, and adults, and confirmed 18 young people.
- 7) I had the privilege to marry 7 couples connected to LOC and the privilege to commend into Christ's care 13 people who God called home.
- 8) We paid down another \$300K on our mortgage this year. In the past three years, since we moved into this beautiful space, through our mortgage payments and extra payments, we have paid off more than a quarter of our mortgage!
- 9) All of that and more while making a weekly impact on the lives of...
 - a. Around 200 children through our Preschool, FaithLand, and Wednesday Night Live, and
 - b. Around 100 middle school and high school youth through Path and Summit,
 - c. Almost 200 adults engaged in Small Groups throughout the week,
 - d. And more as we gathered for worship and serve in the community!

Light of Christ is alive and thriving as the Holy Spirit is at work, drawing people to Christ and to each other. It is my privilege to continue to serve as your pastor in this vibrant community of faith!

Associate Pastor's Report

Pastor Maureen O'Connor, Associate Pastor

It never ceases to amaze me just how fast a year can go by. The saying is true: "A day feels like a lifetime, a lifetime feels like a day." In this case, we can use the same saying for a year! As I've been reflecting on this past year and all that God has been doing through Light of Christ, I can't help but feel blessed to serve alongside such amazing people, who give their heart and soul to "being" the Light of Christ, not only in our Church doors but



beyond our walls, through prayers for one another, volunteering at food pantries, hosting mobile food trucks, tutoring kids through our Branching Out program, making homes safer, warmer, and dryer through ASP, providing yard work for shut-ins, buying Christmas presents for families in need, or just jumping in to offer a helping hand. With each passing year, I spend serving and leading within this community (it's been 3 now!), I fall more in love with all of you! Thank you for being such a warm and welcoming community, who truly meets people where they're at. This type of "being" in the world is priceless for God's Kingdom and I'm excited to see what God will do through us as we walk in faith together!

As I sat down to write this annual report, I realized there was no way that I would be able to cover all that's happened in the life of LOC this year—but here are a few amazing highlights from the ministries I've been fortunate to supervise.

ONLINE As a part of our Ignite initiative we felt God moving us to invest into what it means to "be the church," online, understanding that the internet is an amazing tool to live out the Great Commission of making followers of Jesus. Imagine how many people Paul could have reached with the love of Christ if he had the internet! This platform has grown exponentially, and we are now reaching over 10,000 people locally on Facebook because of your comments, shares, and likes. THANK YOU! Our Tech Director Jack Belford has done an amazing job at building a YouTube channel where we now provide over 350 videos (sermons, testimonies, devotionals) and have almost 400 subscribers. We've also recently started filming a Live Podcast called, *Unpacking Truths*, where Pastor Kendall and I will be discussing relevant and hot topics within our culture while unpacking God's truth to be discovered within them. We will be releasing this sometime in 2024 so keep your eyes open and consider supporting God's mission field online by subscribing to our channels!

YOUTH Our PATH confirmation program welcomed in a new PATH Direction, Candi Neely, who has been such a gift from God, as she graciously shares her high-energy, enthusiasm, and love for the Lord in extremely fun and creative ways with our Jr. High youth. It wasn't easy saying goodbye to our previous Director of 12 years, Jared Skorburg, but we wished him well and our youth prayed over him during his "happy retirement celebration."

Summit, our High School Ministry, continues to flourish as we provide youth with a sacred space, they feel loved as they discover their value in Christ. We are blessed to have welcomed three amazing new leaders this year and our teens have been joyfully serving at our new quarterly serving opportunities that have been added to our program this year.

CHILDREN This year I've had some opportunities to hang out with our children during our Wednesday Night Live weekday program and our Sunday program, FaithLand. It's always a delight to be around children! They constantly remind me of God's joy as they smile, dance, freely share about their lives and boisterously sing praises to Jesus! We are incredibly blessed to have Directors of our Children's ministries who give 110% to our children. They understand just how precious the development of our children's faith is and their knowledge of God's love for them. To grow these ministries that offer precious opportunities for our children, we've decided to focus on building up our volunteer base in 2024. There is no greater gift than to share the love of Jesus with our future through serving in the Children's ministry! Please contact us if you're feeling God move you to serve in a powerful way that will shape the future of Christ's body in the world.

POLICE CHAPLAIN I am thankful for the opportunity God has given us to grow in the ministries that support our wider community. Being a local Police Chaplain for Algonquin has been both challenging and life giving this year. Supporting our local officers and walking alongside families who have tragically lost a loved one has become a sacred space where God has never failed to show up. I can only do this work because of your support and prayers, so thank you!

As we enter into 2024, my heart's desire and prayer is that we would be a church that fearlessly invite others into our life-giving community and that we strive to make, mature, and multiply followers of Jesus.

God's peace and love rest in your hearts,
Pastor Mo

Church Council President's Report

Dave Haut, Council President



Dear Light of Christ,

As I reflect on the past year, there is so much to celebrate and praise the Lord for. The unceasing generosity that this community of Christians continues to pour into our church mission is nothing short of extraordinary. The LOC mission of Inviting people into Christian community, Nurture them in a life-changing relationship with Jesus, so we can Serve Him is constantly on display through your willingness to share your resources of time, talent, and treasure. During every Council meeting we recite our mission statement to remind us that the discussions and discernment we are about to embark on are for His glory.

As we continued in our Ignite campaign, many goals that the Council had set forth for 2023 have been accomplished. The beautiful Memorial Garden with its striking cross and arbor were dedicated in the Fall. Thanks to the Team that worked hard to create this place for us to celebrate those who have gone to be with our Creator. The Endowment Fund was launched in November by the Endowment Team and featured an estate planning workshop. Our online ministry continues to grow and find new ways to bring the word of God to the broader community. In addition, through the continued financial generosity of LOC members and attendees we were able to pay down a significant portion of our mortgage, support YoungLife locally and more globally Lutheran World Relief. We are truly living in our newly adopted One-Fund financial model.

This year the Council had to wrestle with the difficult topic of the viability of the Saturday service. The council spent several meetings in deep discussion and conversation on this topic. In addition, time was spent with the key leaders of the Saturday service to gather their input and perspective. After much discernment and prayer, the difficult decision was made to discontinue the Saturday service. It is through these thoughtful decisions that LOC continues to thrive. Thanks to those (*you know who you are*) that made the Saturday service possible for so long. It's wonderful to see our Saturday night brothers and sisters on Sundays now!

This year LOC celebrated some significant events. After 24 years of serving Light of Christ as the Director of Adult Ministries, we celebrated Bonnie Kautz-Prasse's retirement. Bonnie, thank you for your commitment, enthusiasm, and love for Jesus that you exemplified each day. Happy retirement! If that was not enough, we also celebrated the 20th anniversary of the E3 (Explore. Engage. Experience.) adult faith journey weekend that has transformed so many lives. Finally, we have welcomed dozens of new members to the LOC family, welcome to all our new members!

We also welcomed new staff members. Yvette Butler joined us as our new Director of Adult and Serving Ministries and Candi Neely as our new PATH Coordinator. Thank you for answering God's calling, we are blessed to have you!

As my term on Council comes to a close, it has been an amazing three years. From the tough discussions and decisions to the events and celebrations, it has been a blessing. Special thanks to those that I have served with the past 3 years, I appreciate each of you and thank you for sharing your gifts with me. As I reflect on receiving that phone call 3 years ago from Pastor Kendall asking if I would be willing to serve on Council, I was both honored and humbled by this call. Thank you, LOC, for entrusting me with this responsibility. It has been an absolute privilege and pleasure to serve on Council and to be your Council President for this past year. See you at church!



Church Council Secretary's Report

Michael Sheridan, 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 statement. 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 the growing online ministry as we continue to grow into one church in two spaces, both in-person and online. Other initiatives worked on this year include the Memorial Garden, the Endowment Fund, additional serving opportunities, and the continuation of the Ignite Initiative, which has allowed LOC to continue to Invite, Nurture, and Serve.

Learning time was added to this year's council meetings. Council members read two books: The Volunteer Church and Canoeing the Mountains. These books were valuable for Council members to read to gain insight on effective recruiting, coaching, and rewarding of volunteers, as well as leading in a changing world through uncharted territory. Every month there was an opportunity to share key takeaways from the books, reinforcing what LOC has been doing well and inspiring ideas for the future.

Summary of Motions from 2023 Council Minutes:

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

January 10, 2023

Motion to accept 2023 fiscal year budget with additional of \$10K for memorial garden budget, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

Motion to approve plan by Stonewood Design Group with budget of \$60K, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

February 4, 2023

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

- President – Dave Haut
- Vice President – Sarah Walrack
- Treasurer – Steve Kontos
- Secretary – Michael Sheridan

Motion to move forward with Sharp lease agreement with CDS, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

February 13, 2023

Motion to accept Retreat Meeting Minutes, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

March 14, 2023

Motion to recommend to the Business Management Team (BMT) to pay down the mortgage by \$150K, to be handled through email, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

April 11, 2023

Motion to make a \$25K payment in May and another \$25K payment in fall to Lutheran World Relief, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

May 16, 2023

Motion to accept the Path Coordinator job description, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

Motion to add Bob Meador to Financial Review Team for two-year term, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

June 13, 2023

Motion to make an additional mortgage payment of \$75K in June, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

July 18, 2023

Motion to accept \$700 as the donation for the interment of ashes in the Memorial Garden, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

August 15, 2023

Motion to apply for Employee Retention Credit (ERC), Seconded, Carried unanimously.

Motion to hire Philanthrocorp for two years to launch endowment fund, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

Motion to have Light of Christ hold a Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) mobile food pack in 2024 out of a special gift received, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

September 12, 2023

None

October 17, 2023

Motion to make additional mortgage payment of \$75K in October, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

November 14, 2023

Motion to open a position for 5-7 hours per week, not to exceed \$8K per year, to handle new member responsibilities, Seconded, Carried unanimously.

December 12, 2023

None

2023 Council Members:

Dave Haut - President

Sarah Walrack – Vice President

Steve Kontos - Treasurer

Michael Sheridan – Michael Sheridan

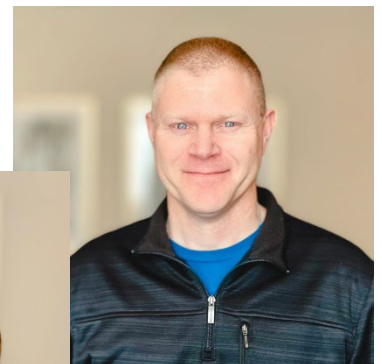
Amy Cianciarulo

Jennesa Gober

Pastor Kendall Koenig

Pastor Maureen O'Connor

Dave Haut and Sarah Walrack have completed their terms and will be transitioning off 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 2024 Council members to be voted on at the Annual Congregational Meeting are listed below:

Nominating Team:

Kim Marsala
Rick Sullivan

Synod Assembly Delegates:

Cathy Fulgham
Joel Fulgham
Greg Bruner
Philomena Bruner

Financial Review Team:

Kirsten McIntyre

Council (three-year term):



John Orlando and his wife Lindsay have been members at Light of Christ since 2009. They have two kids (Eva, 17, and Ben, 14), and all four have been involved with Light of Christ since joining. John has volunteered in the nursery during Sunday service, taught in FaithLand, and was a PATH leader for six years. His faith journey started in the Catholic church, growing up in NJ, and he is so very thankful that he and Lindsay happened to attend LOC on that fateful Sunday in 2008 when Pastor Kendall was preaching about how every Christian should be comfortable asking questions about their faith. Outside of LOC, John is a "maker" at heart with degrees in electrical engineering and computer science. John has played soccer his whole life, loves the outdoors (with backpacking adventures all over the US), and enjoys spending time with family and our flock of critters.

Roger Lall has been a member of Light of Christ since the year 2022. He serves as part of the Welcome Team and the Small Groups Ministry at Light of Christ. Additionally, he leads a small group known as the "Salty Disciples of Christ" (SDC), which is a multi-church men's group. Roger's spiritual gifts are: Teaching and Leadership. For that, he is grateful. And embraces the opportunities to utilize these gifts. Roger has two adult children, Justin and Jessica, a daughter-in-law, Sowmya, and a 2.5-year-old precious granddaughter, Naiya.



Outreach Marketing Team

Al Gibbons, OMT Lay Leader

The Outreach Marketing Team is responsible for the marketing of Light of Christ special events to the congregation and the surrounding community. We've used different marketing strategies to market these events. These special events this past year have included The Children's Easter Egg Hunt, where close to 15,000 plastic eggs shells were filled with candy and distributed on the church property for the children to collect and have fun.

An Artisan Fair was held at the church this year. This was a one-day event where vendors came to set up tables and display their items. There were candles, Woodcrafts, Jewelry, specialty foods



items, just to name a few Items displayed. LOC had a table set up as an informational booth where we answered questions about our church and discussed all the programs we offered. One of the benefits of hosting this event was that people in and outside our community got a chance to see our facility. We did receive a lot of compliments on how beautiful the church was.

We also participated in the Founders Day Fair. We set up children's games around our booth and passed out Information about LOC as the Children had fun playing the games.

Both the Artisan and the Founder's Day events were great ways of reaching out into the community and giving LOC exposure.

Christmas in Algonquin has been our theme the past two years. From the Candy Cane invitation cards for the congregation to invite neighbors, friends, or co-workers to our Photo booth in the Welcome Center and the sign on the corner of the church property, this is all done in an effort to make sure people know they have a place to worship during the Christmas holidays.



Children's Ministries Report

Jessica Adams, Director of Children's Ministries
Jenn Pruyn, Wednesday Night Live! Kids Coordinator
Elizabeth Cummings and Ann Sullivan, Toddler Care Coordinators

As we joyfully reflect on the past year, it is with immense excitement and gratitude that we present to you our Annual Report for our beloved Children's Ministry. In the heart of our community, where laughter echoes and little feet pitter-patter, we've witnessed a kaleidoscope of growth, love, and discovery. Together, we've woven a tapestry of warmth and learning, embracing each child's unique spirit as we build a foundation of love and faith that will last a lifetime.

FaithLand Sunday School at our 9am and 10:30am services have become the vibrant heartbeat of our Children's Ministry, where young minds come alive with curiosity and enthusiasm. With each lesson, friendships deepen, and a sense of community blossoms. FaithLand isn't just a time for education; it's a shared adventure of faith that unfolds in tandem with the rhythm of our Sunday services, creating a seamless blend of worship, learning, and joyful connections that brighten both our mornings and hearts.

In a time-honored tradition of our Children's Ministry, 26 bright-eyed youngsters embarked on a journey of faith and discovery as they learned about communion and received it for the first time. Guided by dedicated teachers, the children explored the symbolism of the bread and wine, understanding the depth of the spiritual bond they were forming. It was a momentous occasion where innocence met reverence, marking the beginning of a lifelong connection to the spiritual tapestry of our community.



In a burst of summer enthusiasm, our Children's Ministry welcomed 220 spirited children and 90 dedicated leaders to a week-long Vacation Bible School program. The air buzzed with excitement as laughter echoed through the halls. Guided by our passionate leaders, these young hearts delved into a world of faith, friendship, and fun. From engaging Bible stories to lively music and creative crafts, each day unfolded as an adventure of discovery. The energy was palpable as the children explored the foundations of their faith, forging bonds with their peers and mentors alike. Underneath the summer sun, this gathering became a joyful tapestry of learning, growing, and creating cherished memories that will last a lifetime.



The heartbeat of our Children's Ministry has quickened with the resounding success and growth of our mid-week programming, where over 100 eager young minds now gather each week. This vibrant expansion has transformed our spaces into bustling hubs of learning, laughter, and connection. Beyond the engaging activities and impactful lessons, there's a special touch to these gatherings – a shared meal that nourishes both body and soul. The aroma of friendship mingles with the delicious scents of the served meals, creating a welcoming environment that fosters not only spiritual growth but also a sense of community. Together, we're savoring the joys of fellowship, fostering a love for faith, and breaking bread as one big family on this beautiful journey of growth and togetherness.

Youth Ministries

Pastor Mo O'Connor, Associate Pastor

Kim Carrera, Director of Youth Ministry, Summer JAM

Jared Skorgburg, PATH Manager (Jan-Feb)

Candice Neely, PATH Director (Started in May)

Ryan Holmer, Summer JAM Coordinator (Summer)

MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY

PATH Job Changes: Jared Skorgburg who served faithfully for 12 years as the PATH Manager, retired in February. In May at our celebration, he came back, and we celebrated his 12 years of leadership. In May, Candice (Candi) Neely accepted the position as the PATH Director and is doing a fantastic job in the ministry.

PATH Confirmation Ministry: 2023-2024: 76 students, 34 leaders. School year enrollment for PATH 2022-2023 was 69 students accompanied by 34 leaders. The volunteer administrative team helps with check-in and with recording worship reflections and serving reflections. Our lessons are from Orange Curriculum. A teaching team was assembled where former PATH leaders, current PATH leaders, and LOC congregants taught some of the lessons. Pastor Mo, Pastor Kendall, Jared, Kim, and Candi also taught throughout the year.



PATH Retreat 2023: 54 students and 35 leaders attended this annual weekend retreat that was held at Lake Geneva Youth Camp. The theme was "Ascend: Rise Up, Made New", based on Colossians 3:2a. It was a powerful weekend where we looked at how the Lord's Prayer can help us to stand up and become a new person.

PATH Serving Events: During the year, the PATH students assisted with Saturday Serves for LOC, making Angel Tree Ornaments, and Operation Christmas Child. Throughout the fall small groups served in many ways,

making cards for nursing homes, yard clean-up for LOC families, donating coats, park clean ups, and food scavenger hunts.



PATH BASH: 94 students and leaders participated in an afternoon serving in different ways in the community, games at Randall Oaks, and worship at LOC. Kim Carrera taught the lesson that night on letting go of our idols and the things that hold us back from following God completely.

Rite of Affirmation of Baptism: Following Faith Expression presentations, 17 8th graders affirmed their baptism at confirmation services in May.



Summer JAM: An average of 27 middle school age students attended. This summer Ryan Holmer stepped into the role of Summer JAM Coordinator. He along with Kim Carrera and several high school assistants led the weekly devotions, games, and activities to strengthen spiritual growth. We had special nacho cheese nights, a water battle, a special Mission Impossible event, and we ended the summer with a color run battle.

HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

Summit Youth Group: Summit had attendance of 30 high schoolers for 2023. Summit has 8 adult leaders. We are using a curriculum from GROW. Some of the series talked about the importance of celebrating how God made us all distinct, having good habits can help grow our relationship with God, and the importance of forgiveness. We added in movie discussion nights where we 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. Throughout 2023 they looked at a series on courage, book of Revelation, and recently started a series on the Enneagram, The Road Back to You. Kim Carrera is the main teacher along with some student-led weeks.

Winter Retreat 2023: In February, 30 students and leaders went to Lake Geneva Youth Camp in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin for a weekend retreat. The theme of the weekend was "KINISI" which is Greek for movement. They grew in their faith as they learned the importance of moving along in their faith. It was a powerful weekend where people for the first time decided to dedicate their lives to Christ and were some rededicated to Christ.



Mission Trip: 40 high school students and adult leaders went to Benton Harbor, MI and partnered with YouthWorks. The theme for the week of serving was "You Are Here". One of the main scriptures for the week was from Matthew 25:14-30. Throughout the week we saw many people using their gifts and talents that the Lord has given them. They were split into multiple work crews as they served the community of Benton Harbor. They served in many ways with some serving at local gardens, at Project Need where they take run down home and repurpose them for affordable living, Habitat for Humanity, resale shops, and cleaning and repairing all over the community. 46 people were God's hands and

feet as they were learning to love EVERYONE authentically. Three 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 for the LOC congregation the weekend of the mission trip worship 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, Funway in Batavia (we even invited the soon to be 8th graders), and a special worship night where we prayed over the college students who were heading off. We spent our Thursdays having Froyo Thursdays or Thursday lunches, it was just a time to get together during the week and fellowship over food. As summer was ending, we had a Lock-in where 30 high school students and some leaders enjoyed a night of fun with no sleep. Two former Summit students planned and lead the night.



Serving Joyfully: During the course of the year, Summit has found some fun ways to serve. We have been partnering with FISH Food Pantry in Carpentersville and serve at their location every 2-3 months. A handle full of our students also serve at LOC - helping with the children's choir and on the Sunday worship team.

Welcome Ministry Report

Jennifer Alderson, Director of Welcome Ministries & Communications

It's nearly impossible to walk through the front doors of Light of Christ on a Sunday morning and not be greeted by someone with a warm smile and heartfelt "hello". And that's not by accident. It is with great intentionality that the 134 members of the Welcome Team sign up to serve at every worship and special service - they genuinely care about providing exceptional hospitality to others that they might experience God.

The Welcome Team continues to expand and add new members each and every year, and 2023 has been no exception. I am beyond humbled and grateful for the faithful service of this team and its leaders - who provide outstanding hospitality on a weekly basis. If there's a need - they fill it. No service goes unstaffed or unattended. They consistently show up, week after week, and give the best of themselves to others.

We also had another exciting year meeting new attendees and worshipers through our Meet the Pastors, Pizza with the Pastors and Membership Classes. It is always encouraging to hear how God is working in the lives of those He brings to Light of Christ. We have had over 56 people become new members this year! Welcome to the Light of Christ Family!

The Welcome Center coffee experience continues to support the IntoKenya Mission, a 501c3 organization headed up by members of our congregation. Make sure to stop by the IntoKenya table when they set up in the Welcome Center 3-4 times a year. This is a great way to see how our support of this mission is directly impacting the lives of orphans and children in the Irechelo Village in Kakamenga, Kenya. You'll be able to see and hear about the ways God is using you to change lives. They even made a trip back to Kenya this past November - and would be happy to share new pictures and stories with you!



Worship and Music Ministries Report

Josh Jones, Director of Music & 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 2023, Light of Christ continued to create meaningful worship experiences with regular collaboration between the pastors, staff, Worship Band Team, Production Team, Welcome Team, Children's Choir, Altar Care Team, and Scripture Readers Team.

We continued to offer worship services on Sunday mornings at 9am and 10:30am that include a preaching pastor, a presiding pastor, and a worship band playing contemporary worship songs and hymns. We were able to include Children's Choir in worship regularly throughout 2023.

The worship ministry is blessed with a full complement of musicians in our worship bands, involving about 35 people, including a few new additions! This year's Christmas Eve 10pm worship service utilized a chamber wind ensemble.

Unique elements were included in a few worship series to add creativity and create a fresh experience for worshippers. For example, the 7-week "Busy" series included a new opening sequence with responsive prayer and video reflections, and the Advent series integrated new decorative elements on the worship platform and added short bumper videos to set up sermons.

In 2023, Light of Christ ended the Saturday 5:00p worship service. We are thankful for how that service was a blessing to our community for so long.

We continue to use Planning Center Online Services software to incorporate all worship ministries in a single location for worship scheduling and planning.

We are still living into our calling to be "one church in two locations" – 1700 Longmeadow and online. This means an ongoing commitment to a worship experience for our congregants whose primary means of engagement is online.



Production Team

The heartbeat of Light of Christ Church's Production Team resonates with a commitment to effectively convey the message and worship music across various mediums, such as YouTube, Facebook, LOC Website, and the TVs in our building. Operating behind the scenes, our team dedicates itself to ensuring a seamless blend of sound, lighting, and visuals to create an immersive and distraction-free experience. Our mission is simple: when attendees gather on Sunday mornings, either in-person or through livestream, we aim to foster engagement and connectivity.

Within our diverse team, members are trained and specialize in Live Sound, ProPresenter (Projection), Camera Operation, Broadcast Mixing, Stage Lighting, Event Planning, and Logistics. This multi-faceted skill set empowers us to deliver the highest quality, where every detail is meticulously curated to enhance the overall worship environment.

Throughout the past year, our team diligently refined production workflows and invested in comprehensive training programs. This dedication resulted in a notable elevation of our production quality. Again, this year, we received some generous contributions, which helped us to acquire and install new movable (rotating) light fixtures, significantly enhancing the visual ambiance on our platform and floor.

The Production Team at LOC extends its services beyond the realm of weekly services. In 2023, we actively participated in a myriad of church functions and ministries, including but not limited to the First Communion Workshop, Faith Expressions, Path Events, Summit Events, Wednesday Night Live, Children's Choir Musicals, Women's and Men's Events, Immersion Baptisms, Memorials, Weddings, Preschool Graduation, Theater Camp, VBS, Breakfast with Baby Jesus, and more. This diversification showcases our team's adaptability and eagerness to support the broader mission of LOC.

As we step into 2024, we remain committed to excellence, continuous improvement, and the seamless integration of technology to amplify the worship journey for all who engage in and outside our building.



LOC is proud of our Production Team:

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

Ed Kolodziejcki
Emma Mathias
Hinrich Schmidt
Jack Belford
James Carey
Jon Ogden
Kristen Lockhart
Mark Foster
Michael Sofia

Nora Belford
Robin Meldgin
Sally Stricker
Sam Weyers
Scott Morgan
Steve Witwicki
Tyler Parquette



Children's Music

Light of Christ Children's Music Theater Camp 2023 was so inspiring and truly showcased the kids' bravery and amazing talent in the show *Singin' in the Rain Jr.* In just two weeks, this group of about 35 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 2023-24 LOC Children's Choir year. With over 40 kids in the choir, 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, In a Galilee Far, Far Away. The kids worked SO hard at home and rehearsal every week, and they did an amazing job telling us a story set on the spaceship S.S Emmanuel. It was so amazing to watch the kids discover the glory of God across the universe! The Children's Choir has also been blessed to have three talented Jr. Leaders, all who have graduated from Children's Choir!

Altar Care

The Altar Care Ministry Team is a small but mighty group who prepare the communion elements for services and other miscellaneous duties in the chancel and other areas of the church. Light of Christ celebrates communion at every worship service so we are always looking for new members to join in this important team.

We have communion bread bakers, and we are always looking for more - the recipe is easy and it is a great way to get involved. Path kids can receive service hours for baking.

Did you know that Light of Christ has its "own" wine? Marty Kaiser is a vintner who makes wine named Martin's Vintage (named for Martin Luther). Marty and his wife donate their time, talents, and grape resources to our church! We are drinking Martin's Vintage #9 right now! Marty began his wine ministry when we were worshipping at the building on Hanson Road.

The team meets monthly (on zoom) for one hour the second Saturday at 8:00 am. Contact Carrie Weyers for more information on joining this team, getting the communion bread recipe, and if you aren't crazy about being on stage under the lights during communion (where you will find an Altar Care team member helping), there are other vital roles where you can help. (Carrie can be reached at carrieweyers@gmail.com and 815-451-2425)

Scripture Readers

The Scripture Reading Team currently has 14 active readers. We have leveraged the use of the Planning Center Online Services application to schedule and notify volunteers for all worship services. We have a regular cadence that allows us to provide the scripture to the readers in advance so that they have an opportunity to practice the reading before the service time. The readers are effectively signing themselves up for times with very little leader intervention. This past year, we have found that our relationship with the other teams such as the Welcome Ministry has allowed us to be more timely in integrating new members into our team and bringing them up to speed on our process.

Team Members:

Blake Regan
Bob Wolf
Carri Helton
Evanne Hoolsema
Jeannette DiTroia

Jeri Traub
Keith Sharlog
Larry Johnson
Lindsey Orzechoskie
Mary Jane Stoner

Mary Kolodziejski
Melissa Hemzacek
Rita Popovich
Steve Witwicki

Adult and Serving Ministries Report

Bonnie Kautz-Prasse, Director of Adult Ministries (January to May)

Yvette Butler, Director of Adult and Serving Ministries (Started in April)

A Farewell and Thank You note from Bonnie Kautz-Prasse:

I want to take a moment to say thank you to the amazing community of Light of Christ Church. In May of 2023, I retired after 24 years of serving as your Director of Adult Ministries. What an honor and blessing it has been to be able to serve our Lord in such a way for so long. I have had the privilege to work alongside so many people who understood what God called us to, to love Him and others. I got to wake up each morning and create opportunities for others with some of the most amazing, kind, loving, energetic, and fun people ever! I will be forever grateful for the incredible journey and the many adventures I got to be a part of with my Light of Christ family.



And finally, I will forever be grateful for our loving, forgiving, creative, joyous, and hope-filled Jesus.

Bonnie



An opening word from Yvette Butler:

Happy New Year! In 2023, Adult and Serving Ministries at Light of Christ experienced a major transition. The initial evolution of the Adult Ministry was a lengthy process and Bonnie Kautz-Prasse, lovingly and creatively, played a key role in establishing numerous enriching opportunities for both the adults within Light of Christ and the broader community. These initiatives were aimed at fostering spiritual growth, deepening connections with the Lord, and nurturing meaningful relationships with each other.

I am forever grateful to Bonnie for all she birthed and created for the Light of Christ Church, and I count it an immense blessing and responsibility to keep these initiatives moving forward and growing in 2024.

As the year 2023 kicked off, I could not have anticipated the incredible opportunity to work alongside such a remarkable staff and wonderful volunteers. A large part of the success of the various ministries within Adult and Serving Ministries is attributed to the outstanding commitment and dedication of our volunteers and leadership teams. I am incredibly thankful to partner with such exceptional individuals at LOC.

CLASSES

Pastor Kendall's Wednesday Morning Bible Study met weekly from September through May. Throughout this period, Pastor Kendall guided the group through different books of the Bible. Having joined one of the Bible studies during its startup in May, I found the experience engaging, prompting a desire to return. The success of this study among the congregants is evident, and I can see why.

SMALL GROUPS

Light of Christ Small Groups Ministry also had some transitions in 2023. With some groups making the decision to disband, new groups were created. LOC's Small groups currently consist of 8 Men's Groups, 7 Women's Groups, and 4 Mixed Groups. Groups consisting of 6-12 members will continue to disciple more people as the Small Group Ministry grows.

MEN'S MINISTRY

Monthly Breakfast: This gathering for the men at the Light of Christ takes place on the 2nd Saturday of every month and is regularly attended by 35-55 men each breakfast. Attendance has grown over the last year due to the effort of the wonderful Men's Ministry Leadership Team to deliver challenging and faith-growing topics each month.

One Day Event: On Saturday October 28, 2023, 52 men gathered at Light of Christ for "Heroes of the Bible" one-day event. An event envisioned for uniting men from other denominations and congregations within the Fox Valley area to be on mission for Christ.



Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church – Huntley, One Hope Church- Lake in the Hills, and Church on the Rock – Huntley joined us for an incredible day of inspiring talks given by speakers from each church, including our own Pastor Kendall Koenig and in-depth conversations within small groups.



Connections Fun:

The Men's Ministry team continued to invite men in for community-building events like the **Men's Kick-off BBQ and Bags Tournament**, which continues to be a great success every year, and **Dad's and Kid's Pancake and Painting Breakfast** delights dads and their kids while bonding over their pancake and painting creations.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Girl's Night In, formerly known as IF Table, gathers for various activities the second Thursday evening of every month – September through May. The name change was to reflect its purpose, which is to invite women to spend an evening "in" at Light of Christ for connections with each other and to grow their faith.

In October of 2023, the women's leadership team experienced great success in hosting a "**Blessings Shower**" for Refuge for Women (RFW). Ladies from LOC and the community gathered to hear an amazing presentation from Meredith Hodge, director of RFW. They showered the female residents who were rescued from Human Trafficking with many gifts. 50 women attended, and more than 50 gifts were donated. Women were so incredibly generous and kind, wanting to give gifts even when unable to attend the event in person.



Women's One Day Event

On Saturday, November 11, 2023, 72 women gathered for the Event "Ordinary to Extraordinary." Light of Christ, God wants to reveal the extraordinary in each of us. Speakers gave impactful messages that tied in this theme with Identity, Anxiety, and Living in the Extraordinary Love of Christ. Great connections

were made throughout the day, while sharing a meal, in small groups, while worshipping, or during a fun rock painting activity. It was a day of many blessings.



Connections Fun:

There were several fun activities for the women of LOC. A relaxing afternoon in June was spent at **The Prairie State Winery**, with live music and wine tasting. It was well attended and loads of fun. In July, ladies gathered for an **Eagles Band Tribute** at the Algonquin Picnic in the Park. **The Tea Party Kick-off** event in September hosted 50 women enjoying a lovely afternoon of sipping tea served with delicious tea sandwiches and other delectable snacks and treats. Each women took home their own unique teacup while some women took home tea pots as a prize for winning at Tea Party Bingo or Tea Party Trivia.



COUPLES MINISTRY

New life was breathed into the Couples Ministry as 3 amazing couples took on the role to create fun, engaging, and faith building events for the couples of Light of Christ Church. Five couples enjoyed a spring afternoon in a **“Road Rally”** competition. It took couples on a journey through town to see how they could work together to get the most points on your hunt and aim for big prizes!

The **“Paint the Night Away”** couples event drew in 10 couples as they explored their creative side. Childcare is always offered at these events to bless the couples with having children cared for in a safe and nurturing environment while they fellowship with other couples.

DISCIPLESHIP

Church-wide Initiative: A 2023 initiative engaged all small groups in the in-depth study, **“A Journey Through Psalm 23”** by Brad Bonhomme. Verse by Verse Brad Bonhomme taught Psalm 23 for greater insight and understanding of the beautiful and well-known psalm.

Devotionals: Weekly devotionals are sent to the congregation on Wednesdays to stay connected with the sermon message and scripture, and as another way to help congregants grow in their relationship with Jesus.

Women’s Summer Bible Study: A six-week study called **“What the Women Saw”** revealed how Jesus values women through the encounters He had with women during His ministry on earth. Many new insights were gained as we listened to video teachings and dug deeper into some familiar bible stories.

E3: Explore, Engage, Experience 2023: was an amazing weekend to connect with God and explore the journey He wants to take us on. The weekend offered compelling, heartfelt talks, hope-filled and fun worship, small group time to build relationships, and lots of laughter. There were 81 people that attended at the Conference Point in Williams Bay, WI.

E3 continues to be a powerful ministry at Light of Christ, offered the third weekend in February.



FRIENDSHIP/INVITE

Bowling: Another great year for the bowling league as 53 people signed up for some friendly team competition, built new friendships, and, of course, lots of laughter.

Softball: Friday nights during summer 2023 was the place to be as men and women came together to form two incredible softball teams to compete in the Crystal Lake Park District Softball League. Friends and family come out to enjoy a beautiful summer evening and cheer on their favorite people.



SERVING OUR NEIGHBORS

Algonquin-Lake in the Hills Food Pantry: Eighteen faithful servants from Light of Christ volunteer at the Algonquin-Lake in the Hills Food Pantry every Monday morning to help add new food deliveries from local grocers to the pantry's inventory. Much preparation with weighing in the food, restocking shelves, organizing, and cleaning the pantry so when guests arrive to shop on Tuesday, everything is in good order for them. Algonquin-Lake in the Hills Food Pantry continues to bless our community, as 2023 was another year of difficult financial challenges for many more families.



Corn Ministry: On Sunday, September 10th, yet another wonderful blessing occurred when Local farmer Dan Fruin gave a generous donation of ¼ acre of fresh corn to be picked and transported to the FISH Pantry in Carpentersville. Eight amazing volunteers joyfully spent a few hours on a beautiful afternoon to pick a total of 1,500 pounds of corn for the families served by FISH. We eagerly anticipate involving youth in the corn harvesting process in the fall of 2024.

Golden Diners: Light of Christ Church partners with Catholic Charities to deliver meals to elderly or disabled individuals in the Algonquin Area. 17 LOC volunteers participate in a delivery rotation alongside other local organizations, ensuring that these individuals receive a nourishing, wholesome, and warm meal each day.

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 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.



Replanted: LOC offers support and encouragement to adoptive, foster, and safe families through Replanted, a faith-based ministry.

Servants Out Serving (SOS) Ministry: As SOS embarked on its second year of ministry, it was actively engaged in planning numerous serving and giving opportunities at Light of Christ. The ministry effectively coordinated and conducted another **LOC Mobile Food Pantry** in September, catering to 132 families from the Fox Valley Area. This marked a significant increase, doubling the number of families served compared to the previous year.



The Turkey Drive collected 124 turkeys and additional Thanksgiving food items, for a total of 2,300 pounds of food. The FISH food pantry board members were surprised and elated.

With the growth of the SOS Ministry, its impact was broadened by initiating the first **LOC Backpack Drive**. A total of 135 backpacks were distributed to children from Kindergarten through High School, equipped with the essential supplies to ensure a successful beginning to their new academic year.



Second Bridge is a non-profit organization that helps foster kids in McHenry County. LOC answered the need for coats and more with **LOC yearly Coat Drive**. Deliveries were made to Second Bridge prior to the onset of cold weather. **The Angel Tree Event** for Christmas received help from Wednesday Night Live Kids as they beautifully decorated angel ornaments containing individual wish lists for children and teens. Gift cards were also collected for families to supply food and other needs. We were blessed by the immense generosity of congregants from Light of Christ to supply over 250 gifts to various organizations that serve the under-resourced, was truly a blessing.



It's essential to also highlight **The 2nd Annual Teacher Appreciation Day Pizza Drop off**, which this year was delivered to Liberty Elementary School in Carpentersville. At Light of Christ, we deeply value the commitment and hard work of teachers in our local schools. The Pizza Drop Off is a tangible expression of our gratitude and a meaningful way to appreciate their dedication.



Operation Christmas Child: The annual Christmas initiative by Samaritan's Purse, involving the collection of shoeboxes filled with special gifts for children worldwide, receives robust support at Light of Christ. A total of 172 boxes were gathered over three weeks, ready to be shipped, and bring joy to kids around the globe. Furthermore, numerous additional boxes were sent from Light of Christ via the online link to extend the reach of this heartfelt effort across the world.

ASP Appalachia Service Project: 28 men and women from Light of Christ Church packed their bags and headed to Appalachia, dedicating a week to working on homes in the area. These dedicated individuals undertake crucial repairs on homes and properties, all while fostering meaningful connections with the residents. Members of the ministry serving team openly expressed their heartfelt and emotional experiences as they engaged in their work, feeling blessed to form connections with the families they served.



LOC Preschool Report

Denise DiSilvio, Director of LOC Preschool

At Light of Christ Preschool, we celebrate God's love for all children. Established in 1991, the school's primary mission is to instill a love of learning in each student. Children in our preschool are actively involved in a curriculum that stresses the social, emotional, physical, and academic aspects of their development. We have a wonderful staff of teachers that create a warm and accepting environment, which supports the development of the whole child.



I have entered my third year at LOC Preschool as director, and we are having a great start to the 2023-2024 school year. Currently, we have two 4-year-old, three 3-year-old, and two 2-year-old classes with over 100 students. Next year we plan on adding a third 4-year-old class. We have a great reputation in the community and our enrollment shows the positive effects of that reputation.

Throughout the year we host Special Events to stay engaged and connected to 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, *Grandparent's Day* in March, and *Spring Sing* in April. LOC Preschool also participated in a community service project. Before Thanksgiving we collected food for the D300 Food Pantry. Our families are so generous, we had two cars full of food donations. The D300 food pantry directly serves the families in our community.



We are excited to start registration for the 2024-2025 school year. Starting on February 1st registration opens for church members, February 5th for current preschool families, and on February 12th registration opens to the community. Each new school year gives us the opportunity to welcome new students into our building and to continue to teach and serve our current families. The teachers and I look forward to ending the school year strong with lots of happy preschoolers!



SERVING ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN
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Light of Christ

2024 Proposed Budget

General Fund	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget
General Income					
General Offering	\$1,015,200	\$1,778,839	\$1,752,074	\$1,691,239	\$1,479,000
Loose Plate	\$4,258	\$8,036	\$3,000	\$5,739	\$5,000
Pre-School	\$19,236	\$28,738	\$31,500	\$33,159	\$32,200
Other Income	\$9,246	\$9,275	\$6,200	\$22,882	\$19,950
Total Income	\$1,047,940	\$1,824,887	\$1,792,774	\$1,753,019	\$1,536,150
General Expenses					
Council Expenses & Staff Compensation	\$801,714	\$832,943	\$879,056	\$852,670	\$918,094
Operations (Office Related, Utilities, Cleaning)	\$97,310	\$123,674	\$130,080	\$120,982	\$126,350
Maintenance (Snow Removal, Landscaping, Small Repairs)	\$28,499	\$34,772	\$47,300	\$47,903	\$39,900
Sr Pastor (Evangelism, Stewardship, Staff Development)	\$22,139	\$25,186	\$23,125	\$27,939	\$24,225
Assoc Pastor	\$3,679	\$4,701	\$8,700	\$4,810	\$9,000
Worship & Music	\$20,247	\$19,561	\$24,050	\$19,287	\$20,350
Adult Ministry	\$9,006	\$7,976	\$14,100	\$10,852	\$16,000
Youth Ministry	\$3,735	\$5,050	\$7,150	\$6,565	\$7,975
Childrens Ministry	\$9,469	\$12,945	\$13,700	\$13,664	\$11,500
Members Connections (new (from Welcome Ministry))	\$0	\$0	\$2,300	\$1,880	\$2,800
Welcome Ministry & Communications	\$9,103	\$6,207	\$4,380	\$4,300	\$4,380
Total Operating Expenses	\$1,004,900	\$1,073,016	\$1,153,941	\$1,110,850	\$1,180,574
Mortgage Payments	(\$234,602)	(\$236,700)	(\$236,700)	(\$236,700)	(\$236,700)
Ignite Initiatives					
Lutheran World Relief, YoungLife & Piano	(\$18,275)	(\$30,000)	(\$80,000)	(\$55,000)	(\$53,000)
Other Initiatives (Diversity, Online & Community Growth)	\$0	(\$10,911)	(\$57,500)	(\$33,057)	(\$55,450)
Other Initiatives (Memorial Garden, Community Serving)	\$0	(\$43,913)	(\$10,000)	(\$34,856)	\$0
Total Ignite Initiatives	(\$18,275)	(\$84,825)	(\$147,500)	(\$122,913)	(\$108,450)
Other Income					
CARES Act - PPP loan forgiveness	\$115,967				
Transfer from New Building Fund for mortgage	\$234,602	\$118,350	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total General Fund (year surplus after Mortgage & Ignite items)	\$140,732	\$548,697	\$254,633	\$282,557	\$10,426
Extra Mortgage Principal		(\$400,000)	(\$400,000)	(\$400,000)	\$0
Merge New Building Fund balance		\$101,895			
Total General Fund Year surplus/(deficit)	\$140,732	\$250,592	(\$145,367)	(\$117,443)	\$10,426
Fund Balance - Beg of Year	\$231,813	\$372,545	\$623,138	\$623,138	\$505,694
Fund Balance - End of Year	\$372,545	\$623,138	\$477,771	\$505,694	\$516,120

Original Mortgage, March 2021	\$3,737,729
Mortgage Balance (1/1/2023)	\$3,134,653
Mortgage Principal YTD	(\$418,830)
Mortgage Balance (12/31/2023)	\$2,715,823
Final 2023 mortgage payment (made in Jan 2024)	(\$100,000)
Approximate mortgage balance, January 2024	\$2,615,823



Worship Schedule

Sunday: 9AM and 10:30AM

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

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