



# 2024 Annual Report



# Senior Pastor's Report

## Pastor Kendall Koenig, Senior Pastor

2024 has been an important year for Light of Christ in many ways. As you peruse the pages that follow you will be reminded of the breadth of ministry that your gifts, leadership, and serving help accomplish. I am amazed every year to read through this report! I would be remiss though, to not first lift up the talented staff that works hard week in and week out to provide the vision, the structure, and the organizing that makes this possible. We are blessed to have each one of them on this team.



Let me lift up some key highlights for you to consider. Worship attendance continues to steadily climb each year. See the chart below:

In person averages	2022: 371	2023: 404	2024: 446
Online (within 1 week)	2022: 210	2023: 233	2024: 284
Total	2022: 581	2023: 637	2024: 730

What you see is that because of your inviting and the positive worship and ministry experiences that people have, they are choosing to make Light of Christ their home. And online growth can happen alongside in person growth—they actually support each other. This year we had 57 people officially join as members at LOC, 39 adults and 18 children.

This year was a strong year financially (see financial info on back pages) because of the generosity that grew in so many of us as we responded to the Ignite vision. We expanded our online opportunities with the launch of our Podcast, expanded our community service, and continued to pay off more of our mortgage. As we head into 2025, it will be important for us to continue to let the Holy Spirit shape that generosity in us so that expanded ministry can continue and stay strong.

A number of other new initiatives also started. Two people from LOC launched a GriefShare group that met at the Algonquin Public library to provide God's comfort and care to those in that important and challenging journey. Pr Antonio and the people of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Addison started a bilingual service on Saturday nights at LOC, as we provided space and some start-up resources. It has averaged about 25-30 people a week in worship. We are launching our new MomCo ministry—a rebrand of MOPS—in January and all the foundational work for that happened this year.

This year also laid the foundation for our major new initiative in 2025: Emotionally Healthy Spirituality. Three other staff and I took the class in the Spring. We then trained over twenty LOC members to be table leaders and in January we will be rolling this out to the whole congregation. I believe this class and these principles will be foundational in shaping LOC's culture into the future.

Along with the ministry that the staff leads, I also had the privilege to officiate at 6 weddings of people connected to Light of Christ, and preside at 8 funerals, proclaiming the hope that we have in Jesus.

Finally, this was a year of some staff transitions. We walked through Pr Mo's leaving, after four years of serving among us. And on January 1<sup>st</sup>, Pr Mark Juliot has stepped into that role in an interim, part time basis as we assess our plans for moving forward. Jessica Adams stepped down as Dir of Children's ministry, but we are grateful that she is now stepping up into that role again. Mary Darnell stepped down as Coordinator of Connections as she no longer had time with the expansion of her real estate business, but we are blessed to have Meredith Stiles stepping into that role now. And in an expansion of our Children's Ministry staff, Mitch Morrison is beginning as Children's Ministry Champion.

We are blessed with a vibrant congregation with many thriving ministries. It is my privilege to serve among you as we continue to live into God's calling for us: Light of Christ exists to Invite people into Christian community, nurture them

in a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ that they might faithfully and joyfully serve Him. Can't wait to follow Jesus' leading with all of you in 2025.

## Church Council President's Report

**Steve Kontos**, Council President



In 2024, through God's provision and the Holy Spirit-led generosity of our congregation's time, talents, and treasure, our church continued to live into its mission in God-centered, meaningful, and impactful ways.

Light of Christ's mission is to Invite people into Christian community, Nurture them in a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ, so that we can faithfully and joyfully Serve Him. In 2024, this was reflected in so many ways:

We continued to provide a spiritually enriched worship experience and through November month end had increased our year-over-year in-person and total attendance on a monthly basis. We welcomed 57 new members, and we had at least 9 - year highs in baptisms, Preschool, and Path enrollment, as well as, in first-time guests walking through our doors. Our Pastors podcasted, and our overall online reach expanded. We started facilitating a weekly bilingual church service in our building. We set the stage for a MomCo (AKA MOPS- Mothers of Preschoolers) ministry relaunch in 2025 and maintained thriving children's/youth, men's, women's, small group, and serving ministries. Our community outreach included feeding many through our Feed My Starving Children event in April, three Mobile Food Pantries, and our annual Turkey Drive. We acted as the hands and feet of Jesus to our neighbors locally and globally through our High School and Appalachia Service Project (ASP) adult mission trips, Operation Christmas Child, and other Servants Out Serving initiatives including random acts of kindness events, backpack distributions, prom dress donations, coat drives, and Angel Tree. We also provided financial support to Lutheran World Relief, Young Life, and Replanted.

When I was asked to serve on the Church Council, I had a general awareness of most of these activities. However, over the last three years, I have humbly experienced them in a more direct way and am truly amazed by the amount of coordination, hard work, commitment, and dedication of our LOC Pastors, staff, ministry leaders, and volunteers. Their efforts make it possible for us to be a church that is such a blessing to so many, both within and beyond our building. I am immensely grateful for all of you and so thankful to be part of this community!

As with our worship experience and ministries, LOC remains in a very healthy place from a financial and business governance standpoint as well. Highlights for the year include:

- The annual review of our financial records and processes, conducted by our Financial Review Team, was again satisfactory with no negative findings.
- During our annual meeting, we will be ratifying our new constitution, reflecting changes required by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).
- Giving for the year, as of month-end November, was on par with 2023, indicating that people continued giving generously despite the conclusion of the Ignite initiative in May.
- Spending remained in line with the budget.

Looking ahead, 2025 will present us with some important transition opportunities. Specifically:

1. Online ministry: For the last 3-4 years, as we navigated the COVID era, we launched and experimented with different forms and degrees of online presence, learning as we progressed. Online ministry has and will continue to play an important role in helping us fulfill our mission. The questions we face in 2025 are: What do we want our online presence to be? How much of our resources do we want to allocate to it? What results are we aiming for?

2. Associate Pastor: In 2025, we will be looking to replace Pastor Mo and all of the gifts and talents she brought to our church. This will not be an easy task. During this transition, we have been blessed to welcome Pastor Mark Juliet, who has 20+ years of experience in an ELCA church similar to ours. He will assist us through the transition while also sharing best practices with us from his prior pastoral experiences.
3. Post-Ignite giving: Many members increased their financial generosity during the Ignite initiative, where we were called to give more than before. With 2025 being the first full post-Ignite year, as reflected in the budget we will be voting on during the annual meeting, we may need to adjust to a somewhat new financial reality for our church.

In conclusion, I mentioned earlier how thankful I am for LOC's Pastors, staff, ministry leaders, and volunteers. This gratitude certainly extends to the people who helped build this church over the last 30 years, the past council members with whom I have had the pleasure to serve and learn from, as well as the current council members who will lead us into 2025 and beyond. As in 2024, there will be challenges for our church as we continue to live out our mission. By leaning on God, staying focused on Jesus, following the Holy Spirit's guidance, and with the depth of leaders we have in our church who do just that, I am confident that we will meet these challenges and continue to reflect the Light of Christ. I look forward to what God has in store for us in the years to come.

Thank you for allowing me to serve on your Council, and God bless!

# Church Council Secretary's Report

Jennesa Gober, Council Secretary



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

Working sessions include ministry updates and updates on the growing online ministry as we continue to grow one church in two spaces, both in-person and online. Other initiatives worked on this year include Constitution updates, Synod

Designation review, Feed My Starving Children Mobile Pack, Endowment/PhilanthroCorp, building up HR Team, ongoing diversity engagement, a SWOT analysis of our church which resulted in the launch of MomCo, and continuation of the Ignite Initiative. All these programs have allowed LOC to continue to Invite, Nurture, and Serve.

Learning time was included in this year's council meetings. Every month, different council members provided articles, readings, or videos that encouraged and helped lead the church council team. There was then an opportunity to share key takeaways from the reading, reinforcing what LOC has been doing well, and inspiring ideas for the future.

## Summary of Motions from 2024 Council Minutes:

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

### January 9, 2024

Motion to make a \$100K payment toward the mortgage in January 2024 to be reflected in December 2023. Seconded, Carried unanimously.

Motion to accept 2024 budget subject to minor revisions. Seconded, Carried unanimously.

### February 13, 2024

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

- President – Steve Kontos
- Vice President – Michael Sheridan
- Treasurer – Amy Cianciarulo
- Secretary – Jennesa Gober

### March 12, 2024

None.

### April 10, 2024

None.

### May 14, 2024

Motion to accept the leave of absence for Pastor Mo for the month of July. Seconded, Carried unanimously.

### June 18, 2024

None.

**July 9, 2024**

None.

**August 20, 2024**

Bob Meador presented information from the Financial Review Team and spoke with Council during this meeting to present results from the 2024 LOC Financial Review. Council reviewed information via email and unanimously accepted the review.

**September 10, 2024**

Motion to allow Prince of Peace Church space on Saturday evenings at LOC for the next 6 months and to provide funding of \$5,000 for musicians and any other small incidental costs. Seconded, Carried unanimously.

Motion to maintain the Gold Plus plan for Portico benefits for the full-time staff and that we maintain 92.5% for the employee and 7.5% for the employee for 2025. Seconded, Carried unanimously.

**October 8, 2024**

None.

**November 12, 2024**

Motion made based on documented actions that Pastor Mo has taken that the Church Council is ending her pastoral position at Light of Christ Church. Seconded, Carried unanimously.

Motion made to provide Pastor Mo with 4 months of severance. Seconded, Carried unanimously.

**December**

Motion was made to accept all of the ELCA Constitution recommended changes in the LOC constitution and to put to a constitutional vote at the annual meeting in January 2025. Seconded, Carried unanimously.

Motion was made to extend a letter of agreement to Pastor Juliot to serve part-time as Interim Associate Pastor at LOC starting January 2025. Seconded, Carried unanimously.

**2024 Council Members:**

Steve Kontos - President

Michael Sheridan – Vice President

Jennesa Gober - Secretary

Amy Cianciarulo – Treasurer

Roger Lall

John Orlando

Pastor Kendall Koenig

Pastor Maureen O'Connor



## Church Council Changes and Nominations



Steve Kontos and Michael Sheridan have completed their terms and will be transitioning off Church Council after the Annual Congregational Meeting. They have been great leaders, and we are thankful for their contributions over the past three years.



**The Nominees for the 2025 Council Members and additional positions to be voted on at the Annual Congregational Meeting are listed below:**

**Financial Review Team:**

Matt Crail

**Nominating Team:**

Chris Kardys

Bonnie Kautz-Prasse

**Synod Assembly Delegates:**

Dana Ashmore

Jeannette DiTroia

Robin Fiorentino

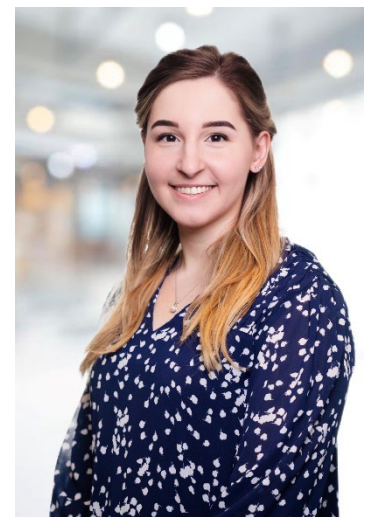
Steve Fiorentino

**Council (three-year term):**



**Rich Johnson** has been attending LOC for 11 years and has been involved in various ministries, such as E3, small group member, and Path Leader. I got baptized for the first time when I was 49 years old. I married my high school sweetheart, and we have been together for 42 years and married 32 years. We have 5 children and one grandchild.

**Kyla Singleton** has been attending Light of Christ Lutheran Church since she was 11 years old, actively participating in various ministries over the years. She went through the PATH confirmation program, served as both a student leader (2011-2014) and adult leader (2019-2020), and has been involved in multiple mission trips. Since 2021, Kyla has been actively part of multiple areas of the church including the Diversity and Inclusion Committee (2021-2022), serving and speaking at the 2024 E3 (Engage, Enrich, Explore) retreat, and as a leader for LOC's High School Ministry, Summit, which inspired her to launch the Emerge Young Adult Ministry to engage college students in spiritual growth. She currently lives in Schaumburg, IL with her 2-year-old mini goldendoodle, Milo, and looks forward to continuing to serve the Light of Christ community.





# Children's Ministries Report

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

Our children's ministry exists to nurture the faith of young hearts, providing a safe and loving environment where children can experience God's love, grow in their faith, and discover their purpose in Christ.



## Programs, Activities, and Attendance

### Sunday Mornings | FaithLand

- Toddler Care 1yr – 2yr (average 19 kids per month | 2024)
- Preschool 3yr – 5yr (average 34 kids per month | 2024)
- Elementary Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade (average 69 kids per month | 2024)

### Wednesday Evenings | Wednesday Night Live

- Children's Choir (25 kids registered)
- WNL Dinner (average of 45 people served per week)
- WNL Preschool 3yr – 5yr (12 kids registered | 24-25)
- WNL Elementary Kindergarten – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade (72 kids registered | 24-25)

### Sacrament & Summer

- First Communion (26 kids registered | 2024)
- Vacation Bible School (223 registered | 2024)



## Looking Ahead: Goals for 2025

There were no shortage of challenges in 2024, and we are grateful to turn the page and begin a new chapter with renewed passion in 2025!

- **Program Growth:** As we continue to stretch and grow our volunteer team, the hope is to be able to invite more children into our programs – we are praying and planning for steady growth across the board in the year to come!



- **Volunteer Development:** Our newest staff member, Mitch Morrison – Children's Ministry Champion, will be focused on volunteer recruitment and training in 2025 so that we can support our team in ways that we have dreamed of for years!
- **Spiritual Development:** We plan to dedicate an entire month of Sunday's to the practical use of the Bible in the classroom and at home so that parents can be assured that their children know what the Bible is and how to use it by the time they enter middle school!

## Acknowledgements

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





# Youth Ministries

**Kim Carrera**, Director of Youth Ministry, Summer JAM

**Candice Neely**, PATH Director

**Ryan Holmer**, Summer JAM Coordinator (Summer)

## MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY

**PATH Confirmation Ministry:** 2024-2025: 80 students, 34 leaders. School year enrollment for PATH 2023-2024 was 76 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. Kim, Candi, and the pastors also taught throughout the year.



**PATH Retreat 2024:** 63 students, 41 leaders and staff attended this annual weekend retreat that was held at Lake Geneva Youth Camp. The theme of "Merge: Life Hurts, God Heals", is based off 2 Corinthians 1:3-4. It was a powerful weekend where we looked at the how even though life can hurt us and leaved us with wounds, God can heal those.



**PATH Serving Events:** During the year, the PATH students assisted with Saturday Serves for LOC, making Angel Tree Ornaments, and Operation Christmas Child. Though out the year small groups served in many ways, making cards for nursing homes, yard clean-up for LOC families, donating coats, park clean ups, food scavenger hunts, and PATH families helped donate turkeys for the Thanksgiving Turkey Drive.

**PATH BASH:** 98 students and leaders participated in an afternoon small group bonding through a fun scavenger hunt around the community. We were led in worship by the youth band and Meghan Parquette. Kim Carrera taught the lesson that night on how it is important to connect with other Christians because God will use them in our lives to bring glory to Him.



**Rite of Affirmation of Baptism:** Following Faith Expression presentations, 15 8<sup>th</sup> graders affirmed their baptism at confirmation services in May.

**Summer JAM:** An average of 26 middle school age students attended, we had a record breaking of 6<sup>th</sup> graders attending. Ryan Holmer plans and leads a great summer of lessons and activities. He along with, Kim Carrera, and several high school assistants led the weekly devotions, games, and activities to strengthen spiritual growth. We had special nacho cheese nights, a water battle, a special Mission Impossible, event and we ended the summer with a color run battle. We had an amazing summer!



## HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY

**Summit Youth Group:** Summit had an attendance of 31 high schoolers and leaders for 2024. Summit has 9 adult leaders. We are using a curriculum from GROW. Some of the series talked about the importance of having real friends, faith is a journey not a marathon, and the importance of helping others. 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 2024 we continued our series on the Enneagram and used Right Now Media for some series and ended the year with Ecclesiastes. Kim Carrera is the main teacher along with some students leading on different weeks.



**Winter Retreat 2024:** In February, 28 students and leaders went to Covenant Harbor in Lake Geneva Wisconsin for a weekend retreat. The theme of the weekend was "Movement" where we saw how Jesus' life is one of incredible moments of movement. Students grew in their faith as they learned the importance of moving along in their faith. It was a powerful weekend where students grew closer in the Summit community but also with Christ.

**Mission Trip:** 38 high school students and adult leaders went to Lake Traverse Native American Reservation, SD and partnered with YouthWorks. The theme for the week of serving was "Rooted in Love". The main scripture for the week was from Ephesians 3:14-21. Throughout the week we saw how this community on the reservation was rooted in love because of how much love they poured out to others. They were split into multiple work crews as they served the community of Lake Traverse. They served in many ways; some helped serve by scraping houses, cleaning churches, painting at many places, and every group worked alongside John who was a staple in helping the community to learn and grow at the local college. We were God's hands and feet as we were learning how

important it was to be rooted in God's love. Two 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 on the weekend of the mission trip message.



**Summer Summit:** We spent this summer connecting through fellowship and some fun events. In May, we welcomed the 8<sup>th</sup> graders to Summit at a Pizza event. Over the summer we did some fun things like a movie night, pool party, game nights, lessons, and a special worship night where we prayed over the college students who were heading off. We spent our Thursdays having Froyo or lunches, it was just time to get together during the week and share in fellowship over food. In the beginning of the summer, we had a LOCK-in where 35 high school students and some leaders enjoyed a night of fun with no sleep. Two former Summit students planned and led the night.

**Serving Joyfully:** During the year, Summit has found some fun ways to serve. We have been partnering with FISH Food Pantry in Carpentersville where we serve quarterly on Tuesday nights. A handful of our students also serve at LOC - helping with the children's choir and are part of the Sunday worship team.



# 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 2024, 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 9:00 am and 10:30 am 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 2024.

The Worship Ministry is blessed with a full complement of musicians in our worship bands, involving about 40 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 worshipers.

We continue to use Planning Center Online Services software to coordinate 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 Light of Christ Church Production Team is dedicated to sharing the message and worship music for live in-person services and through platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and the LOC Website. Working behind the scenes, we combine sound, lighting, and visuals. Our team members specialize in Live and Broadcast Sound, ProPresenter (Projection), Camera Operation, Broadcast Video Mixing, Stage and Room Lighting, Event Planning,



and Logistics, enabling us to deliver high-quality worship experiences that foster connection and spiritual engagement for all attendees, whether in person or online.



The Production Team plays a vital role in supporting every ministry at LOC. From Children's Ministry to Women's and Men's groups, Youth programs, Small Groups, Preschool, and Pastoral events, we provide the technical and creative support needed to enhance the impact of each ministry.

In 2024, we improved our workflows and provided training to team members, enhancing our production quality.

Looking ahead, we plan to:

Offer more training to grow team members' skills.

Apply new techniques in lighting.

Upgrade our technology and explore new tools.

Foster teamwork and creativity to improve worship experiences.



Strengthen our collaboration with each ministry to better serve their unique needs and events.

We remain committed to excellence and using technology to enhance the worship journey for everyone connected to Light of Christ Church, both in-person and online.

### **LOC is proud of our Production Team:**

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

Hinrich Schmidt  
Jack Belford  
Jennifer Gonzalez  
Joe Matlachowski  
Jon Ogden  
Julian Walker  
Kristen Lockhart  
Mark Foster  
Michael Sofia

Rich Stiles Jr.  
Robin Meldgin  
Sally Stricker  
Sam Weyers  
Scott Morgan  
Steve Witwicki  
Tony Gonzalez  
Tyler Parquette  
Will Little

## Children's Music

Light of Christ Theater Camp 2024 was so inspiring and truly showcased the kids' bravery and amazing talent in the show *Frozen Jr.* In just two weeks, a staggering 50 campers created a whole show complete with singing, dancing, and Frozen magic. This was such a fun time, and it was so beautiful to see the kids supporting and helping each other learn and grow.

We've had a strong start to the 2024-25 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, *A Night Full of Stars*. The kids worked SO hard at home and rehearsal every week, and they did an



amazing job telling us a story set in Hollywood (Bethlehem's version). It was so fun to see the kids in their "red carpet" look! The Children's Choir has also been blessed to have six talented Jr. Directors, all who have graduated from Children's Choir and most who have been in choir since they were in preschool! We're so thankful for them!

## 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. If your spiritual gift is HOSPITALITY, this team is for you!

Light of Christ uses homemade unleavened bread that is baked by members of our congregations. We have dedicated bread bakers, and we are always looking for more. The recipe is easy, and it is a wonderful way to get involved. Path kids can receive service hours for baking. Small groups can bake together.

Marty Kaiser is Light of Christ's vintner who makes wine named Martin's Vintage (named for Martin Luther). How many churches can claim that? Marty and his wife donate their time, talents, and grape resources to our church! We are drinking Martin's Vintage XI right now! Marty began his wine ministry when we worshiped in 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.

Contact Carrie at [carrieweyers@gmail.com](mailto:carrieweyers@gmail.com) and 815-451-2425.

### Altar Care members:

Jaki Berggren  
Deb Cummings  
Amy Krempel

Judy Mandelky  
Jane Simon  
Sarah Walrack

Brianna Weyers  
Carrie Weyers

## Scripture Readers

The Scripture Reading Team currently has 13 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.



# Adult and Serving Ministries Report

**Yvette Butler**, Director of Adult and Serving Ministries



As 2024 comes to a close, I am once again thankful to our Lord and Savior for sustaining the ministry and pouring out His grace, favor, and blessings upon us all. While there have been challenges along the way (nothing ever goes perfectly), these moments have taught us the most important lesson of all:

growing in faith and trust in our Sovereign God.

Once again, I have witnessed the remarkable generosity of those who serve and contribute to the Adult and Serving Ministry efforts at Light of Christ. Much of its success is due to the commitment and dedication of our volunteers and leadership teams. I am deeply grateful for their support and friendship. Getting to know the people of Light of Christ Church has been my greatest joy. The 2024-25 Adult Ministry Season kicked off with a Family Picnic and games for all ages, hosted by the Men's and Women's Ministry Team. It was a great way for Light of Christ families to welcome in new families to the church and get information on how to get plugged into community here.



## CLASSES

### **Pastor Kendall's Wednesday Morning Bible Study:**

Pastor Kendall leads a weekly Bible study for a growing group of individuals who are passionate about diving deeply into the Word of God. From September through May, participants have the opportunity to learn and grow in faith and community.

## SMALL GROUPS

The Small Groups Ministry is in need of expansion. With our ever-growing community, our focus is on training individuals within small groups who are ready to step into leadership roles. Currently, our small groups consist of 6 Men's Groups, 7 Women's Groups, 1 Couple's Group (with childcare), and 1 Co-Ed Group, each with 6-12 members.

At the start of this year's ministry season, we introduced a new role within the Small Groups Ministry: The Small Group Leader Advocate (SGLA). This role provides an additional layer of support for Small Group Leaders. One of the responsibilities of the SGLA is to help leaders identify group members who are ready and willing to step into leadership roles in 2025. The SGLA team also assists in training and equipping Small Group Leaders, as they encourage and disciple them in their faith journey.

## 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. The Men's Ministry Leadership Team continues to deliver challenging and faith-growing topics each month.



### **One Day Event:**

On November 9th, 41 men gathered at Light of Christ for the Men's Ministry One-Day Event. The event theme was "A Man After God's Own Heart." Attendees heard relevant messages contrasting the lives of King David, whose primary focus was his relationship with God, and King Saul, who prioritized worldly power and success. The event featured small group discussions after each message, allowing men to engage deeply with the content. The day concluded with a Speaker's Panel Discussion, where attendees had the opportunity to ask questions related to the topic to each of the speakers. Participants left feeling greatly encouraged and



equipped with wise guidance for living like David in a world influenced by Saul's values.

### **Social Connections:**

The Men's Ministry team continued to invite men into opportunities for building community. On February 24<sup>th</sup>, an afternoon at *X-Golf Indoor Golf*, 19 men joined together for some fun and relationship-building while they practiced their swing for spring.

On March 9<sup>th</sup>, 22 men attended a *Chili Cook-off* for a showdown of flavors, friendly competition, and fun.

## **WOMEN'S MINISTRY**

### **Girl's Night In:**

Girl's Night In gathers on the second Thursday evening of every month, from September through May, for various activities centered on faith and friendship. This ministry season, which began in September, saw an increase in attendance. Topics such as "How to Study the Bible" (with 36 women in attendance) and "Self-Care for the Holidays" (with 26 women in attendance) were thoroughly enjoyed. Speakers shared meaningful and practical messages, offering advice and tips that women could immediately apply during activities and discussions at their tables.

In 2024, we began to offer childcare, which has allowed younger moms the opportunity to attend. The Women's Ministry Leadership Team is excited to continue offering topics that help women grow in their relationships with Jesus and one another.

### **Weekend Retreat:**

The Women's Ministry Weekend Retreat will take place at the Lutherdale Retreat and Conference Center from April 25–27, 2025. Planning is underway, and we are eager to see what the Lord has in store for this special event.

## **COUPLES MINISTRY**

Couples Ministry hosted a special brunch and presentation on the Enneagram personality typing on January 27<sup>th</sup> with 30 couples in attendance. Valuable insights into Enneagram's purpose were shared, emphasizing how it can enrich communication and foster a deeper understanding within relationships.



The Annual Trivia night was a great success, with 60 people in attendance.



## **SENIOR EXPLORERS' MINISTRY**

An energetic and fun group of LOC Seniors brought back the Seniors Ministry for uniting seniors and build a community to Explore New Ideas – Make New Friends – Create New Ways to Serve through outreach. 31 attended their first gathering Movie and Pizza Night at LOC on October 11<sup>th</sup>. Many more to come!

## **DISCIPLESHIP**

### **Devotionals:**

In addition to the faith-growing ministries available to adults, we send out a weekly devotional related to the Sunday sermon, featuring a relatable message from one of the incredibly gifted members of our Devotional Writing Team. This team was created to offer diverse perspectives and experiences, allowing us to reflect on the weekly messages shared by our pastors.

### **E3: Explore, Engage, Experience 2024:**



E3 (formerly known as Kingdom Weekend) is a cornerstone of discipleship at Light of Christ Church. For 21 years, this weekend retreat has provided an opportunity for the people of Light of Christ to connect with God and one another, exploring faith, engaging in small groups,





and experiencing God's love in unexpected ways. In February 2024, 63 individuals were blessed by E3, either through attending or serving. Participation in the weekend was active and lively.

E3 continues to be a powerful ministry due to the commitment and hard work of those who take on leadership and serving roles.



## SPORTS MINISTRY

### Bowling:

2024-25 season opened with over 47 people ready to roll. LOC individuals continue to build new friendships and bond through friendly competition, of course, lots of laughter.

### Softball:

Friday nights at Lippold Park in Crystal Lake was the place to be as 20 men and women came together to form two softball teams to compete in the Softball League at the Crystal Lake Park District. Friends and family come to cheer on their favorite folks on the team.

## SERVING | COMMUNITY OUTREACH

### Algonquin-LITH Food Pantry:

Light of Christ Food Pantry ministry continues to be a blessing by serving every Monday morning at the Algonquin | Lake in the Hills Food Pantry. Recently, many people answered the urgent call to serve on the driver's team and extra help with heavy lifting. Once again, we



are very grateful to the LOC congregation, who quickly answered the call for help.

### 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 and foster families through Replanted, a faith-based ministry. This group now meets monthly at Light of Christ.

### Operation Christmas Child:

The annual Christmas initiative by Samaritan's Purse, which collects shoeboxes filled with special gifts for children worldwide, received strong support from Light of Christ. Over three weeks, a total of 225 boxes were





collected—an increase of 52 boxes compared to last year—ready to be shipped and bring joy to children around the globe.

**Servants Out Serving (SOS) Ministry:**

The SOS Ministry effectively runs outreach opportunities that serve local communities. This dynamic team of 9 plan and run amazing outreach events.

Starting the ministry year with a **Backpack and School Supplies drive**, LOC generously gave and served by packing 135 backpacks that were distributed to schools in District 300 with greatest need.



SOS's other incredible outreach efforts include: **Coat & Winter Gear Drive** gave an abundance of winter wear to Second Bridge, which serves foster children in McHenry County.

**Turkey Drive** collected 127 turkeys to the FISH Food Pantry in Carpentersville.

**Angel Tree** collected 310 gifts and gift cards for local organizations caring for children, homeless community, and local families.

**Random Acts of Kindness Event** sent out groups, families, and individuals to perform Random Acts of Kindness by serving at Senior Living Facilities, Animal Shelters, Food Pantries, and



more. On February 4<sup>th</sup> each act of kindness was to show the love of Jesus to those in our community.

**Cinderella's Closet** was blessed by the collection of over 100 prom dresses for young girls to find their dream gown to attend Prom.



**Mobile Food Pantry Emergency Collections** – Elgin Homeless encampment fire, Coat Drive for Meadowdale School.



**Adult Missions Trip: ASP – Appalachian Service Project**

18 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 groups 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.



**Introducing for 2025: EMERGE: Young Adults Ministry – Kick off January 19th**



# 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. We pride ourselves on a balanced approach of learning through play and academics. Preschoolers are actively involved in a curriculum that emphasizes the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive aspects of their development. We have an exceptional teaching staff that creates a safe and nurturing environment that supports the development of the whole child.

We have had a great start to the 2024-2025 school year. This will be my fourth year as the preschool director at LOC Preschool. Currently, we have three 4-year-old, three 3-year-old, and two 2-year-old classes with 120 students enrolled. We continue to grow and thrive in the community. Our greatest compliment is getting referrals from current preschool families.

Throughout the year we continue to host Special Events to stay engaged with our families. These include - *Dads, Dudes, and Donuts* in September, *Fall Festival* in October, *Christmas Sing and Breakfast with Baby Jesus* in December, *Moms and Muffins* in February, *Grandparent's Day* in March, and *Spring Sing* in April. Another fun activity we have added to the Preschool for



the children to benefit from is Stretch-n-Grow. Stretch-n-Grow is an organization that teaches children the importance of exercise and health. We also continued our annual food drive in November. We collected food for the holiday season for the D300 Community School District food pantry. As you can see, we have the most wonderful and generous preschool families.

The teachers and I are excited to start registration for the 2025-2026 school year. Starting on February 2<sup>nd</sup> the registration will open for church members, February 5<sup>th</sup> for current preschool families, and February 10<sup>th</sup> registration will be open to the community. We are always excited to start a new year to welcome new friends and to continue to serve our current families. We feel so blessed and privileged to teach the young people in our community.



**SERVING ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN**  
locchurch.com

# Light of Christ

## 2025 Proposed Budget

General Fund	<u>2022</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2023</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2024</u> <u>Budget</u>	<u>2024</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2025</u> <u>Budget</u>
General Income					
<b>General Offering</b>	<b>\$1,778,839</b>	<b>\$1,691,239</b>	<b>\$1,479,000</b>	<b>\$1,587,215</b>	<b>\$1,282,400</b>
Loose Plate	\$8,036	\$5,739	\$5,000	\$7,183	\$6,200
Pre-School	\$28,738	\$33,159	\$32,200	\$38,771	\$43,100
Other Income	\$9,275	\$22,882	\$19,950	\$27,597	\$25,050
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1,824,887</b>	<b>\$1,753,019</b>	<b>\$1,536,150</b>	<b>\$1,660,767</b>	<b>\$1,356,750</b>
General Expenses					
Council Expenses & Staff Compensation	\$832,943	\$852,670	\$918,094	\$945,191	\$894,014
Operations (Office Related, Utilities, Cleaning)	\$123,674	\$120,982	\$126,350	\$119,045	\$124,760
Maintenance (Snow Removal, Landscaping, Small Repairs)	\$34,772	\$47,903	\$39,900	\$33,421	\$40,490
Sr Pastor ( <i>Evangelism, Stewardship, Staff Development</i> )	\$25,186	\$27,939	\$25,725	\$26,529	\$28,715
Assoc Pastor	\$4,701	\$4,810	\$7,500	\$2,641	\$4,760
Worship & Music	\$19,561	\$19,287	\$20,350	\$19,359	\$21,295
Adult Ministry	\$7,976	\$10,852	\$16,000	\$9,051	\$17,500
Youth Ministry	\$5,050	\$6,565	\$7,975	\$6,587	\$8,100
Childrens Ministry	\$12,945	\$13,664	\$11,500	\$10,049	\$11,500
Members Connections (new (from Welcome Ministry))	\$0	\$1,880	\$3,200	\$1,771	\$2,700
Welcome Ministry & Communications	\$6,207	\$4,300	\$3,980	\$4,265	\$4,500
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,073,016</b>	<b>\$1,110,850</b>	<b>\$1,180,574</b>	<b>\$1,177,909</b>	<b>\$1,158,334</b>
<b>Mortgage Payments</b>	(\$236,700)	(\$236,700)	(\$236,700)	(\$236,700)	(\$236,700)
<b>Ignite Initiatives</b>					
Lutheran World Relief, YoungLife & Piano	(\$30,000)	(\$55,000)	(\$53,000)	(\$25,000)	\$0
Other Initiatives (Diversity, Online & Community Growth)	(\$10,911)	(\$33,057)	(\$55,450)	(\$45,028)	(\$17,750)
Other Initiatives (Memorial Garden, Community Serving)	(\$43,913)	(\$34,856)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Faithland Wing projects: Blinds & Accoustic panels				(\$21,838)	
<b>Total Ignite Initiatives &amp; Projects</b>	(\$84,825)	(\$122,913)	(\$108,450)	(\$91,866)	(\$17,750)
<b>Other Income</b>					
Transfer from New Building Fund for mortgage	\$118,350	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total General Fund (year surplus after Mortgage &amp; Ignite items)</b>	<b>\$548,697</b>	<b>\$282,557</b>	<b>\$10,426</b>	<b>\$154,291</b>	<b>(\$56,034)</b>
<b>Extra Mortgage Principal</b>	<b>(\$400,000)</b>	<b>(\$400,000)</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$100,000)</b>	<b>\$0</b>
Merge New Building Fund balance	\$101,895	\$0			
<b>Total General Fund Year surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>\$250,592</b>	<b>(\$117,443)</b>	<b>\$10,426</b>	<b>\$54,291</b>	<b>(\$56,034)</b>
Fund Balance - Beg of Year	\$372,545	\$623,138	\$505,694	\$505,694	\$559,986
<b>Fund Balance - End of Year</b>	<b>\$623,138</b>	<b>\$505,694</b>	<b>\$516,120</b>	<b>\$559,986</b>	<b>\$503,952</b>

Original Mortgage, March 2021	\$3,737,729
Mortgage Balance (1/1/2024)	\$2,615,823
Mortgage Principal YTD	(\$133,626)
Mortgage Balance (12/31/2024)	\$2,482,197
Mortgage payment (made in Jan 2025)	(\$100,000)
Approximate mortgage balance, January 2025	\$2,382,197





Worship Schedule

Sunday: 9AM and 10:30AM

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

1700 Longmeadow Parkway  
Algonquin, IL 60102  
847.658.9250

[www.locchurch.com](http://www.locchurch.com)