

2024

Annual
Report



**Grace Lutheran Church
Fremont, Ohio**

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

February 2, 2025

Grace Lutheran Church

Fremont, Ohio

Meeting Arrangements:

The business meeting will begin at 10:15 a.m. in the sanctuary.
This meeting can be attended In person or via ZOOM.

Please Note: The reports of the Pastors, Church Council, Auxiliaries, Treasurer, The Proposed Budget for 2025, and the Proposed Resolutions for the 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting are printed for you in this Annual Report. Please study the Annual Report carefully.

It will be helpful to you to have this copy in front of you during the Congregational Meeting.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of Grace Lutheran Church is to *“Present the Light of Christ”*

EXCUTIVE COMMITTEE

President	David Cooper
Vice-President	Annette Fisher
Secretary	Connie Amor
Treasurer	Ruthann House

TERM ENDING 2025

David Cooper	John Burmeister
Rae Ann Cooper	Cornelia Star
<i>(Completing term of Sarah Auen)</i>	<i>(Completing term of Nelda Bauer)</i>

TERM ENDING 2026

Connie Amor	Ruthann House
Greg Jess	Cecilia Boucher

TERM ENDING 2027

Annette Fisher	Peggy Kiser
Jerry Letzring	Tracy Michles

STANDING COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Christian Missions/Outreach Committee	Annette Fisher
Christian Worship Committee	Peggy Kiser
Christian Property Committee	Greg Jess
Christian Stewardship Committee	Cecilia Boucher
Christian Youth/Growth Committee	Tracy Michles

Standing Committees meet monthly at a time designated by that Committee.

Church Council meets the second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m.

ANNUAL MEETING
GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
FEBRUARY 2, 2025

Business Meeting10:15 a.m.

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- 7. A Message from Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton.....page 59
- 8. ELECTIONS
 - A. Endowment Board
 - 1st Seat - Re-election to 2 year term - Lori Wise
 - 2nd Seat - Re-election to 2 year term - Matt Moss
 - B. Synod Assembly will be held again in 2026.
 Representatives will be elected at the 2026 Annual Congregational Meeting.
- 9. OTHER
- 10. ADJOURNMENT
 - A. Closing Prayer

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

OPENING LITURGY

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

God, we praise you and give you thanks.

You are good, and your mercy endures forever.

You gave us a garden with good food to eat.

We praise you for food that nourishes us.

You rescued your people from slavery.

We praise you for freedom.

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

We bless you for your justice and mercy.

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

We praise you for his death and resurrection.

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

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

Strengthen your church with every spiritual gift

and commission us again to be your servant people.

Multiply in us the fruit of the spirit:

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

Send us in your love and mercy,

that the world may know you and praise you.

Now Thank We All Our God

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

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

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

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

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 840

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

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

Let us pray.

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

Amen.

Grace Lutheran Church
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION
February 4, 2024

Jerry Moses, President, called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. in the sanctuary of Grace Lutheran Church with 87 congregants in attendance and 2 joining via Zoom. Jerry began the meeting with important announcements along with discussing the recent resignation of Tom Curry. Jerry stated the Executive Committee along with Pastor Mark met with Tom. After some discussion Tom was asked if he would change his mind and possibly stay. Tom requested 24 hours to make his final decision. After 24 hours Tom stated he made the decision to resign. Jerry asked if anyone had any questions and there were none.

OPENING DEVOTIONS

Maureen Pump shared a devotion beginning with how many made a New Years Resolution and if they are still practicing that resolution? She reminded us all to be kind and think of others.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES FROM JANUARY 29, 2023

Larry McElfresh pointed out that there were some typographical errors in the minutes from the Annual Meeting from January 29, 2023. The office stated they will correct the minutes. Sarah Auen moved to accept the minutes. Pam Pelphrey seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried.

REPORTS

- Pastoral Staff
Ed Muffler moved to accept the combined Pastoral Staff reports. Pam Pelphrey seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried.
- Church Council
Greg Jess moved to accept the Church Council reports. Ruthann House seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried.
- Financial Reports
Maureen Pump moved to accept the Financial Reports. Pam Pelphrey seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried.

RESOLUTIONS

- **Resolution #1- Church Budget**

Whereas, the Executive Committee and the Church Council have proposed a budget for the 2024 calendar year after careful review, discussion, and prayer, and

Whereas, the input of the Congregation has been sought;

Therefore, be it resolved that the 2024 Proposed Budget be adopted at this Congregational Meeting, and that we, as Grace Lutheran Church and its individual members, respond faithfully and responsibly with our offerings so that this budget may be met.

Jim Scranton proposed a question regarding the memorial fund. He asked if any funds were spent from the memorial fund without the congregation's knowledge? Ruthann spoke to that question, and stated there have been 3 reports given to the congregation.

- Update in May
- Update in the Fall, with a thorough accounting report.
- Update to President Jerry Moses' report on the funds.
- Executive asked the congregation for ideas as to how to spend the 1.3 million received. Four people responded with ideas from the entire congregation.
- It was also stated that funds that were spent from the memorial fund came from funds that were in an account at a different financial institution moved to Croghan Colonial and were used for the bathroom renovations and the new sign along with the new doors on Baker Street.

Janet Dorr moved to adopt the 2024 Grace Lutheran Budget as proposed. Beth Muffler seconded.

Following no further discussion a vote was taken by ballot along with an anonymous poll launched via Zoom. Votes were counted, and the resolution was carried.

- **Resolution #2 - Church Volunteers**

Whereas, this Congregation depends upon its people to share their time, energy, and enthusiasm to advance the ministry of the Church and its mission; and

Whereas, these people deserve our acknowledgment, appreciation, and respect;

Therefore, be it firmly resolved that we thank our many volunteers for their gracious hours of service, which have contributed to the ministry of Grace Lutheran Church in education, music, youth, worship, evangelism, property, finance, and office administration during the 2023 calendar year.

Ed Muffler moved to adopt the resolution recognizing all the valuable volunteers that contribute time and effort to carry out the important work of the congregation. Pam Pelphrey seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried.

- **Resolution #3 - Church Staff**

Whereas, the following individuals have sought to serve their Lord through their work at Grace Lutheran Church, Noah's Ark Preschool, and LIFT, as paid staff members: and

Whereas, our congregation should acknowledge and appreciate their efforts;

Therefore, be it resolved that we extend our sincere gratitude to all members of these staffs for their faithfulness and dedication for the 2023 calendar year. They are, as named below,

- Pr. Paul Bailie, Linda Baumer, Pr. Mark Bogen, Tom Curry, Tricia Dabrunz, Nancy Ewing, Kaitlyn Fisher, Michaelle Goodman, Heather Hawn, Andrea Hirt, Gregg Kinsey, Doug Morris, Jim Post, Susan Sawdo, Maureen Pump.
- And be it further resolved that we acknowledge with gratitude the efforts of the following people who served on the staff of Grace and whose time of service came to an end during 2023: Tom Curry, Kaitlyn Fisher

And be it further resolved that we continue to support, pray for, and work in partnership together as a Congregation and church staff to the Glory of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Peggy Kiser moved to adopt the resolution recognizing the valuable efforts of all church staff. Larry McElfresh seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried.

L.I.F.T Operating Agreement - Re-approval

Ed Muffler moved to approve the submitted LIFT Parish LLC Operating Agreement. Ruthann House seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried.

ELECTIONS

- Endowment Board - need to fill 2 seats
- 1st Seat - Re-election to 2 year term - Al Mehlow
- 2nd Seat - Vacant, candidate needed. Nominated name - Mark Gedeon.

Pam Pelphrey moved to accept these nominated names to be elected to the Endowment Board. Les Widmer seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried.

Synod Assembly Representatives

- David Cooper, Kaitlyn Fisher, Maureen Pump

Janet Dorr moved to accept the representatives. Beth Muffler seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried.

OTHER

Sarah Auen requested that the names of people who join the church and leave the church be in print so the congregation is aware. Maureen stated those who join, their names are printed in the bulletin but we can also list in the G & T the names of who joined and who left the church.

Pastor Henry Seibert stated he believes we should follow "as unto the Lord" to strive for excellence within this congregation. Pastor Henry requested the signs around town that have the incorrect worship times on them should be removed. He is willing to take the signs down and asks if anyone would be willing to help. He also stated the drinking fountain is not operational and also the Clover Street door is locked on Sunday which is not welcoming. If it is out of fear that the door is locked, then we can possibly install cameras.

Les Widmer asked for an update from the Call Committee. Ed Muffler gave an update stating the committee is talking to a candidate who they have interviewed twice and will possibly come for a visit. The Synod has been very helpful and brought to the committee 6 candidates. The Call Committee is very hopeful.

Janet Dorr asked what steps are being taken to hire a new organist. Information was shared in Pastor Mark's Grace Notes that a Sunday Organist Candidate will play on February 18th. She is sending a resume, which he will forward to the Executive Committee.

The question was asked: who is in charge of the communication for LIFT? Maureen Pump stated every week LIFT posts a newsletter with updates and Grace does share LIFT information.

Sarah Auen asked why the Pastors do not visit nursing homes. It was stated we would discuss this issue at Church Council but Maureen Pump also added that Pastor Mark does visit members at nursing homes and in-home visits and he takes communion with him. The Pastors and Maureen also call the hospital daily to ask if there are any Lutherans admitted.

ADJOURNMENT

Bill Hollister moved to adjourn the Annual Meeting. Bill Bowlus seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried.

Closing Prayer

Maureen Pump led us in the closing prayer and the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted
Connie L. Amor
Secretary

**Grace Lutheran Church
Congregational Call Meeting
August 25, 2024**

President David Cooper called the meeting to order. Purpose of the meeting: to vote on the recommendation presented by Church Council to extend a Call to Pastor Clayton J. Bailey to be our Pastor and compensation package.

Jan Harris made a motion to open the meeting. Mary Nossaman seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried.

Maureen Pump led the congregation in an opening prayer.

President David Cooper asked the congregation if anyone had any questions. There were no questions.

The Call Committee was called up front for an introduction. Kristen Lindsay spoke about the call process. All members of the committee spoke to the process and how impressed they are with Pastor Bailey.

Ballots were passed out for a vote to call Pastor Clayton J. Bailey. A team counted the ballots. There were 113 yes votes and 0 no votes. It was a unanimous vote.

Ruthann House moved to extend a call to Pastor Clayton J. Bailey. Tom Michles seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried.

Next in the Congregational Call Meeting the compensation package was passed out to the congregation. Ruthann House, Treasurer outlined the package. The compensation starts on the start date which is October 1, 2024. Pastor Bailey has 30 days to accept. Ballots were handed out for the vote. Votes were counted with 101 yes and 2 no votes.

Tom Michles moved to accept the compensation package. Sue Brickner seconded. Vote was taken. Motion carried. We will extend a call to Pastor Clayton J. Bailey

Tom Ritter, representative from the Northwestern Ohio Synod Office spoke to the congregation as to what is next. The established start date is October 1, 2024. Pastor Bailey will have 30 days to accept the call. The Bishop's office will call President David Cooper to arrange a date for the installation of Pastor Bailey. The installation may take place during the week to allow Pastors of other congregations the ability to attend. Pastor Bailey is able to start his call with Grace Lutheran Church before he is installed as our new Pastor.

Kathy Burmeister made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Kristen Lindsay seconded. Vote was taken. Vote carried.

Maureen Pump closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Connie L. Amor
Secretary



It is a joy to be with you and a part of this year's Annual Report. Let me introduce myself: my name is Clayton Bailey, most of my friends call me "C.J." and I am humbled to be called as the 10th Senior Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church here in Fremont Ohio.

Believe it or not our journey began in April of 2024 when I had the first opportunity to chat with the Call Committee. I'm still not sure what they saw in this child of God, yet here we are! I believe we can all realize that four years is a long time to be in transition. At the same time, please

know that my discernment process was just as slow and tedious, so I join you in giving thanks that we are here in this journey

together. Our paths further collided as you gathered on Sunday, August 25 to officially extend the Letter of Call. The rest they say is "history" and here we are,

untied as pastor and people, for what I hope will be a very long and faithful ministry together. I am sure, you are thinking and praying the same.

In our short time together, my 1,000 ft observations says all is well. We are a vital congregation that thrives on worship and service to the community. Grace is full of kindness, compassion, and welcome. And, yes, the welcome you have extended to me and my entire family has been more than kind. Thank you for that!

Zooming in a bit closer, my 100 ft view says that we are a congregation in transition. In the month leading up to my arrival, we said goodbye to our Kitchen Coordinator. Upon my arrival, our organist said it was time to say goodbye due to health concerns. Soon after that the Bishop's Office asked Maureen to consider taking on St. Mark as their S.A.M., and Pastor Paul Bailee announced his departure from LIFT to serve the congregations of Marblehead and Lakeside. In the coming year, we'll say goodbye to Linda our long time Office/Financial Administrator. Adding all that together, you are getting to know me as your new pastor, and we are all quickly adapting to some of the many transitions taking place. Gratefully, God walks with us in every transition and has opened the door to several willing volunteers to help in the Sharing Kitchen. God has more than provided a wonderful musician as we have welcomed Nate Leonard to our organ and piano bench. I am sure that just as God has guided us this far, God will continue to guide and provide for us in the future!

For my close up, 10 ft away observations. Wow! This is going to be a joy! Individually and collectively there is a lot of joy to be found here. I can't say enough about our staff and how dedicated they are to seeing every aspect of this place through from start to finish. If you haven't, please remember to share your words of thanks and gratitude for all that they do! I also can't say enough about our worship life together. If you haven't figured that out already, I have a passion for worship! Nate, and all of the gifts he brings, is a wonderful complement to that, just as much are each and every one of you! For that I am indeed very grateful and excited about what the future will bring.

So what does the future bring? Our bishop has designated 2025 as the "Year of Listening." How fitting! I can't help but wonder if that was done intentionally for all of us newly called pastors. Regardless, we are going to spend our year listening. One of the ways we will listen to each other is by starting something I'd like to call "Listening with a Second Ear." On the second Sunday of the month everyone is invited to come and share conversation, concerns, ideas, dreams, and simply listen to one another. It will be an opportunity to challenge me, ask questions (without expecting answers) and simply ponder what does it mean to be a people of God here in this place.

Beyond that, I look forward to connecting more one on one with each of you. I hope to host several small group events, making time for individual visits, and build relationships with each of you as we listen to each other.

(Senior Pastor continued.)

We will also make room to listen to God. God is still speaking in many and various ways! We will listen to the voice of God through worship and Bible study. At the same time we will strive to be the voice of God here in this place through worship, our service to this community, and as we seek to serve rest of the world which God has made.

Let me close with some words of thanks. To the staff: Linda, Tricia, Heather, Jim, Michelle, Gregg, Andrea, Susan, and Nate your passion, work, and love for this congregation is to be commended. Along with that your graciousness and kindness in welcoming me, has been appreciated more than you know. To Maureen, Pastor Matt of St. John's and Pastor Andrea at Hayes & Trinity UMC: I look forward to our shared work together here in the Kingdom of God called Fremont. There is no doubt that our congregations are stronger together and our ecumenical partnership needs to be duplicated and shared. Thank you for shepherding me as I continue to get orientated. To each of you as church members: I know many have shared your gratitude for me being here. I continue to be humbled and I sense how sincere your words are. It is a blessing for me to be in such a place and to share the same joy and enthusiasm with you. Lastly to my family: Wendy, Andrew, John & Haley you always keep me going. For all of the love, patience, and flexibly especially in my discernment I can't thank you enough for just being there. I might not say it enough, but you are loved and appreciated, more than you will ever know!

Lastly, as we share all of our joys in beginning this journey together, please be mindful and remember in your prayers the people of First Lutheran in Tiffin who begin their journey without a pastor. May God faithfully answer their prayers, just as God answered ours by bringing us together.

God's peace and blessings!

Rev. Clayton J. Barbey

Lay Minister / Synodically Authorized Minister

2024

PROJECTS CURRENT AND COMPLETED

Served as the Synodical Authorized Minister for Grace through October 2024.

Attended monthly SAM meetings.

Began the work to bring Let's Build Beds here in September 2025

Participated in God's Work our Hands event

Attended farewell dinner for Pastor Paul Bailie

Attended farewell dinner for Pastor Mary Carmen and Leo.

Helped organize and attended Advent Open house at Grace

Participated in LIFT Lessons and Carols service at Trinity Methodist.

Helped plan Meet and Greet for Pastor Bailey

Participated in LIFT Epiphany Service

Participated in LIFT Round Robin series on Wednesdays for Lent.

Took CPR training

Continuing with Good Mornings with Moe. A morning devotional 4 days a week

Continue to lead Spousal Grief Support Group

Continued to work with Noah's Ark teachers through May 2024.

Attend the LIFT Leadership Meetings

Lead in the Book Study group in person and virtual (Book Worms)

Act as one of the managers of Church Face Book page

Continue to oversee the My Brother's Keeper ministry.

Continued to serve as worship leader through October 2024.

Lead 2 Bible studies each week.

Contact hospital 1 time each week

Assisted with Connecting Kids to Meals Summer Meal Program

Review Welcome Cards

Preached 28 sermons.

Conducted 9 funerals.

Conducted 2 baptisms.

Conducted 2 weddings.

Act as staff representative to Missions/Outreach Committee

Attend LIFT gatherings.

Continue to lead a Juggling Act for women.

Keep up with our hospitalized, home bound and nursing home members.

Attended Endowment Board meetings.

(Lay Minister/SAM continued.)

Participate in Hymn Selection Team
Participate on Stewardship Committee
Participate on Worship Committee
Conduct interviews and write Grace Stories
Oversee the Homebound Communion Ministry
Organized and participate in Grace Gathers
Continue to take Continuing Education classes:
 Festival of Homiletics
 Rediscovering Hope: Encouragement for Rural Ministry
 Entering Rural Ministry: Rural Curiosity
 12 SAM continuing educational opportunities (one a month)

It was the best of times, and it was the worst of times. Many of us will recognize that quote from the Dicken's classic *A Tale of Two Cities*. I would describe my life over the past year as the best of times and the worst of times.

Last February 7th my husband, Duane, had Whipple Surgery for Pancreatic Cancer. This cancer diagnosis has put us on a journey I never could have imagined. The surgery was 9 hours long, but everything went well. His cancer was determined to be a stage 2, and all the lymph nodes were clear. There was a positive margin left that the doctor could not remove so Duane had to have 6 months of chemo and will be having 5 weeks of radiation soon. The Whipple surgery is a very difficult surgery, and the chemo was very hard on Duane, but he has come through it very well. You will not see him very often because his immune system is compromised due to chemo, so he avoids crowds. In many ways this was the worst of times for our family, but God has given us the strength we need to keep going. Thank you for all the support you have given us. The food, cards, rides, and kind words have enabled us to see the love of Christ at work in our lives.

Let's not forget the best of times! On October 1 Pastor Bailey started as our Pastor here at Grace. On that same day Bishop Daniel Beaudoin asked me to meet with him at Down Thyme. I had a feeling I knew what he wanted. With Pastor Paul Bailie taking a new call that left St. Mark without pastoral leadership. I had a feeling the meeting with our bishop had something to do with that. I was right. Bishop Beaudoin asked me to consider being the pastoral leader for St. Mark Church. I have been in ministry 32 years but never in all that time did I ever think I would have my own congregation. I had filled in several times at St. Mark and knew the congregation to be welcoming and a very active congregation. Before I left our meeting that day, I knew it was where God was calling me to go, and I said yes. I would drop my hours at Grace to part time and take on St. Mark part time. I anticipated how hard it would be to not be at Grace on Sunday morning and I do miss seeing everyone. I stop in every few weeks before worship begins to see people, since St. Mark's worship is at 10:00. I am so blessed to be at St. Mark. The people there are grateful to have their own leader and are determined to continue in mission and ministry for years to come.

Yes, this past year has been the best of times and the worst of times but isn't that the nature of life. Life is filled with joy and sorrows. I have had the blessing of experiencing Jesus walking with me through both seasons as I have experienced the love and support of both Grace and St. Mark members. Thank you! And may we continue in mission and ministry together for many years to come!!

Peace and Love,

Maureen Pump, Lay Minister

PASTORAL ACTS

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Baptisms			
Children	7	6	4
Adults	0	1	0
Confirmation - Youth	4	0	3
Marriages	3	3	1
Funerals			
Members	13	12	8
Non-Members	5	1	2
Saturday and Sunday Worship Services	153	127	102
Weekday Worship Services	19	12	13

MEMBERSHIP

Received by Baptism, Confirmation, Letter of Transfer or Re-Profession			
Baptized	11	10	12
Confirmed	4	3	6
Removed from roster by Death, Transfer, Moving to other denominations & Inactivity			
Baptized	22	14	18
Confirmed	22	14	17
Membership as of end of year			
Baptized	927	917	911
Confirmed	632	617	612

OTHER ITEMS

Membership receiving custodial care	9	16	16
Shut-in residing in private homes	6	5	5
Avg. attendance in Saturday/Sunday Worship	144	146	142
Avg. online attendance for streamed Worship	-	-	185
Avg. attendance in SS/Bible Study/Small Groups/Confirmation/Choirs	206*	275*	113*

*This number reflects the average attendance gathered from scheduled in-person and online events throughout the current year.

Council President

Fellow members of Grace Lutheran Church,

As 2024 draws to an end, it's time to reflect on all that has transpired.

2024 definitely brought on its own challenges - Interim Pastor Mark Bogen retiring, the hiring of a new music director, and finally, the hiring of a new Senior Pastor to lead the church into the upcoming new year. In addition, Maureen splitting her position between Grace and the SAM for St. Mark.

As we move into the coming new year with its own set of challenges, we should remember we are a church family and decisions made are in the best interest of the church benefitting all that desire to worship along with the community we live in.

I would also like to recognize and thank our Call Committee members for their tireless work in bringing Pr. Clayton Bailey to Grace: Kristen Lindsey, Chair; Kathy Burmeister, Levi Cooper, Ike Durrell, Kaitlyn Fisher, Greg Jess, AJ Mehlow, Ed Muffler, and Roger Haynes. I also can not say "thanks" enough to our staff here at Grace, the Executive Committee, and all of our elected church council members. Without the efforts of these wonderful folks and God's guidance, none of this is possible.

Respectfully,

David Cooper

Council President

Christian Outreach/Mission Committee

Council Members: Rae Ann Cooper, Annette Fisher

At Large member: Harry Aspacher, Barb Klohn, Vi Ohms, Connie Amor, Beth Muffler

Staff Liaison: Maureen Pump

We strive to carry the message of Grace Lutheran Church to our community, locally, and globally to represent our congregation in doing the will of our Lord Jesus Christ and to love our brothers and sisters in our church, community, nation, and the world.

We Support the following ministries: My Brother's Keeper (*our Member to Member Ministry*) which provided assistance for 10 people in 2024, Soup Kitchen, and Sandusky County Food Pantry. We support National and World Missions through Lutheran World Relief, ELCA World Hunger, and ELCA Global Missions.

We as a congregation join in financial support for ELCA Missionary Rev. David Brondos who is serving in Mexico City. Our budget includes \$1800 for his support. We also provide support for NW Ohio Synod, Global Mission Water Project of Mzagole, Tanzania, East Africa.

Programs - Bridge of Hope Ministry and Grace Bookworms reading group continue to meet. The Grief Support group, Bible Studies and SLAM Bible studies continue to be well attended. We have continued using our shopping carts located in the Narthex to continue the collection of food donations for our monthly Food Pantry Challenge. Collections continue to be taken for the monthly Noisy Offering. Both food and monetary collections for the year 2024 were donated to the Soup Kitchen, Backpack Buddies, Liberty Center, and Noah's Ark Preschool.

Events of 2024 of our committee hosted a Valentine's Day Party in February which included food and games for our church community also including the children and families from Noah's Ark.

Upcoming Events planned for 2025 will include a Valentine's Day dinner to take place on February 14, 2025 and a cornhole tournament to be held on June 22, 2025 at Copper Whale Winery. Proceeds raised from both events will be going towards our Let's Build Beds Projects. Our Let's Build Beds event will take place on September 13, 2025. Grace Gathers will continue to meet the third Thursday evening of the month at area venues.

(Christian Outreach/Mission Committee)

We continue working on our committee's 2025 goals as well as incorporating new opportunities for missions, as they present themselves.

Our Committee thanks all of our members who have supported these missions. We ask our church family to continue to keep us in prayer as we continue to work together to bring God's work and word to the community of Fremont.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Fisher

2024 Events

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Sunday Kid’s Zone | Just Chill Middle School Camp |
| Confirmation | Lock-In |
| First Communion | Graduation Recognition |
| Vacation Bible School | Summer Park Tour |
| ELCA Youth Gathering | End of Summer Bash |
| Instruments of Peace (Jan-Mar) | Paige Russell memorial 5K |
| Wednesday Night Spirit Kid’s Club | 3rd Grade Bibles |
| A Royal Adventure Princess Camp | Canoeing Adventure |
| God’s Army Bootcamp | Community Trunk or Treat |
| Connecting Kids to Meals | Sewing Opportunities |
| Easter Breakfast | Community Christmas Sponsor |
| Family Game Night | Christmas Program |
| Lego Derby | Bell Ringing at Wal-Mart |

Additional Activities of Youth Director

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Fremont City Schools Ace Mentoring | NWOS Youth Discipleship Network |
| Noah’s Ark Chapel Time | Joy Circle Bible Studies and Events |
| COR Cub Scouts at Grace | God’s Work, our Hands |
| Support backpack Buddies | online Facebook rest Bible Study |
| Tech Support/Car Church/Livestream | Coordinate meeting space w/Girl Scout Troop |
| Schedule Acolytes | Pre-Election Prayer Service |
| Volunteer & Recruitment Trainings | Advent Tour of Churches |
| Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza | Lead A Time to Rest Bible Study |
| Craft & Crops to support Soup Kitchen | Lead Synod Youth Leader’s Book Study |
| Fremont City Community Cookouts | |

Tech Support and Streaming

I continue to assist with Livestreaming with the help of George Dupey, Riley, Madison, & Libby Hawn. This past year we have streamed the weekly services, Midweek Lent & Advent, and Holy Week. I help transmit the Car Church service at the 9am service.

Thank You to our Acolytes!

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Brogan Biller | Riley Hawn | Mason Moss |
| Brenden Fisher | Kayden Michles | Pam Russell |
| Libby Hawn | Tommy Michles | PJ Russell |
| Madison Hawn | Kaden Moss | Carter Wagner |

Thank You to our Adult Volunteers who have Helped or Served in One Way or Another along the Year!

- | | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Sarah Auen | Tracy Michles | Susan Sawdo |
| George Dupey | Kelsey Prescott | Mike Schalk |
| Rob Hawn | Taylor Rollins | Cornelia Star |
| Andrea Hirt | Candy Rosenberger | Danielle Wagner |
| Kristen Lindsey | Penny Russell | |

Youth Minister

As we come to the close of another year, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to each of you for your involvement in our church youth program. Your commitment, enthusiasm, donations, and support have made 2024 an unforgettable year. It is because of your dedication that we continue to grow and thrive as a community. To the parents and grandparents, thank you for entrusting us with the privilege of guiding and nurturing your children. Your partnership in helping shape their spiritual journeys has been invaluable.

To our amazing youth, I am incredibly proud of each of you. Your energy, creativity, and willingness to step up in service, worship, and fellowship have been a true blessing to all of us. You are the heart of our church, and your passion for spreading love and kindness inspires everyone around you. Whether through volunteer work, classes, or simply being a supportive friend, you have demonstrated the values that we hold dear.

As we look forward to 2025, I am filled with anticipation for the new adventures and opportunities that lie ahead. Together, we will continue to strengthen our faith, deepen our relationships, and explore new ways to serve and make a difference. Let us embrace the coming year with hope and excitement, trusting that the best is yet to come. Thank you once again for being a vital part of our church family – I can't wait to see what God has in store for us in the new year!

In God's Service,

Heather Hawn

Director of Youth and Children's Ministry

Noah's Ark Preschool - 2024

The Noah's Ark Preschool year starts the Monday after Labor Day and ends the Friday before Memorial Day. The staff consists of the Administrator, Andrea Hirt, and teacher, Susan Sawdo. We also have Chapel, with Heather Hawn, who is so wonderful and helps out with the preschool a lot! We are grateful to Linda and Tricia for keeping track of finances and tuition. And we definitely can't forget about Michaelle and Jim for keeping the preschool clean and sanitized! We also want to welcome Pastor Bailey, he's been a great addition to the church/preschool.

As the administrator, I attend Tuesday staff meetings when possible. This is to keep everyone up to date with things going on in the preschool. We have a great line of communication with church staff- in person and via email. We continue to communicate with our parents on a regular basis (during drop-off, pick-up, or through text messages) to get their input on things happening in the preschool.

For the end of the school year graduation (May 2024) we had an amazing party. Graduation was in the sanctuary and we were able to continue our party out into our beautiful courtyard. Because of our Candy Bar fundraiser, we were able to cater this event. We provided chicken chunks from Chunky Dunks and macaroni and cheese from Roots Poultry. Our wonderful families provided all of our yummy desserts. The families enjoyed a bouncy house, face painting, many games, and wonderful fellowship! This is something we will strive to do each year for graduation.

We are in full swing this year and are very excited that each year we continue to grow. This year we are at 21 total. With most of our three year olds coming back for the following year. We are very happy that many siblings will also be joining us as well. We have a wonderful group of families and they have been amazing. We are excited to see what the rest of the school year holds.

I would like to add that state licensing visited the preschool on September 27 and we did very well. We had no corrective action plans to submit just some minor paperwork to correct. We will continue to strive for excellence but there is always room for improvement. I would love to thank the congregation for their love and support for this amazing preschool and everyone involved in making it grow more and more each year.

Our program will continue to support these children with a deep love for learning in faith. We love to make things fun and educational at the same time. We are designed to meet a child's social and emotional well being as well as preparing them for kindergarten. We hope everyone enjoys our preschool program and is happy with the direction it is going. We will continue to work hard on increasing enrollment and get everyone talking about the great things happening here at Noah's Ark Preschool!

Sincerely,

Andrea Hirt
Administrator

CUB SCOUT PACK 302

ANNUAL REPORT
FOR 2024



CUBMASTER COMMENTS

A Brief History of Pack 302: Our Second Annual Report

In this year's annual report, we will delve into the history of Pack 302. This pack is part of the Eagle Bay District, which encompasses packs and troops across Sandusky and Ottawa counties. The District falls under the larger Erie Shores Council, with its main leadership hub located in Toledo at the renowned Camp Miakonda. The community of Fremont, Ohio, once featured five different packs, with Pack 302 standing out as the most notable. Currently, Fremont is home to just one cub scout pack, Pack 302, which proudly commemorates 58 years of continuous service as a unit, including two years under the charter agreement with Grace Lutheran Church.

Exceptional Support from Our Church Community

Heather Hawn, our primary contact, has proven to be an invaluable asset at our monthly parents' meetings. Her encouragement inspires us to pursue our objectives, foster kindness, and engage in meaningful service projects. Heather has played a crucial role in connecting our pack with the church, enabling us to establish a positive rapport with the front office staff. Linda consistently assists us with our inquiries regarding finances and scheduling.

Jim Post regularly provides service opportunities for the scouts, who have come to relish their participation in the spring and fall cleanups.

We are also grateful for the past support from Pastor Mark and look forward to collaborating with Pastor Bailey, particularly on the P.R.A.Y. Program. The assistance we have received from the church community has been a revitalizing source of encouragement.

DANIELLE WAGNER
Committee Chair - Acting Cubmaster

P.R.A.Y.

P.R.A.Y. aligns with BSA's Duty to God

The P.R.A.Y. Award serves as a vital link between scouting and churches, providing benefits to young individuals. This initiative fosters stronger youth, family, congregations, and councils.

Additionally, it creates pathways for future scholarships to support youth in pursuing their post-secondary education.

We look forward to collaborating with Pastor Bailey on this program in 2025/2026

Do I have to belong to a scouting group to earn a P.R.A.Y. award? No, girls and boys may earn this award even if they do not belong to a Girl Scout, Boy Scout, American Heritage Girl, or Camp Fire group. Members of youth groups and Sunday School classes may participate in these programs.

For more information see

Danielle Wagner
Pack302fremontohio@gmail.com
419-656-8415

ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

Pack 302 is a vibrant community brimming with diverse activities. Our monthly Den meetings are tailored to the scouts' age and grade levels, focusing on the completion of various adventures. In addition, we gather as a full pack once a month to embark on more extensive journeys and participate in enjoyable events, which include hiking, campfire programs, family camping, the Pinewood Derby, Scout Sunday, youth lock-ins, ice skating, and more. Below, you will find our comprehensive year-round schedule of events. Our objective is to offer scouts and their families opportunities to engage in both traditional and innovative activities, ensuring they remain active and involved.



2024 ACTIVITIES

● WINTER

- Pinewood Derby 100% scout participation.
- Family Ice Skate 50% participation.
- Family Campout Camp Miakonda 50% participation
- Winter Parade Float 95% participation
- Scout Sunday at Grace Lutheran Church 40% participation.
- Annual Cross over for our 5th grade AOL Scouts to the Troop level: 99% scout participation

● SPRING

- District Wide Pinewood Derby 6 scouts qualify.
- Coffee/Tea Council Fundraiser 25% participation
- Annual Cub Scout Lock-in & YMCA Field Day 25% participation.

● SUMMER

- Family Camping - East Harbor 25% participation
- Pack Kayaking Event - 25% participation
- Cub Scout Day Camp 98% scout participation.
- Bowling Club monthly 50% participation
- Fishing events in Fremont 40% scout participation

● FALL

- Collect over 22 socks and personal Hygiene products for Bridge of Hope Mission through LIFT.
- Add 10 new scouts to our membership roster.
- Assisted in fall clean up at Grace Lutheran.
- Fall Family Camping 60% participation at Christy Cabin.
- Snoozed at the Toledo Zoo 25% participation.
- Council Popcorn fundraiser 75% participation. Earn 3rd place as a top selling unit for Eagle Bay District.



Our Scouts & Leaders



LEADERS

Leadership Structure of Cub Scout Pack 302

Cub Scout Pack 302 is privileged to have six dedicated registered leaders running its den and pack meetings. Here's a look at the team behind the program's success:

- Brianna Lopez: Lion Den (Kindergarteners) Leader
- Brittnae Biller: Tiger Den (1st Grade) Leader
- Destinee Chapa: Wolf Den (2nd Grade) Leader
- John Willey: Bear Den (3rd Grade) Leader
- Lucas Eisenhauer: WEBELO Den (4th Grade) Leader
- Tammy Smith: Arrow of Light Den (5th Grade) Leader



COMMITTEE

Pack 302 boasts a robust committee comprising both parents and registered leaders. The committee convenes monthly to deliberate on matters such as finances, events, membership, and other crucial aspects that keep the pack healthy and thriving. The committee comprises the following esteemed members:

- Committee Chair (outgoing) - Danielle Wagner
- Treasurer - Kara Eisenhauer
- Cubmaster (outgoing) - Vacant
- Secretary - Erica Damschroder
- COR - Heather Hawn

Additionally, all parents of Pack 302 are members of the committee.

CUB SCOUTS

Exploring Cub Scouting: Enhancing Children's Growth

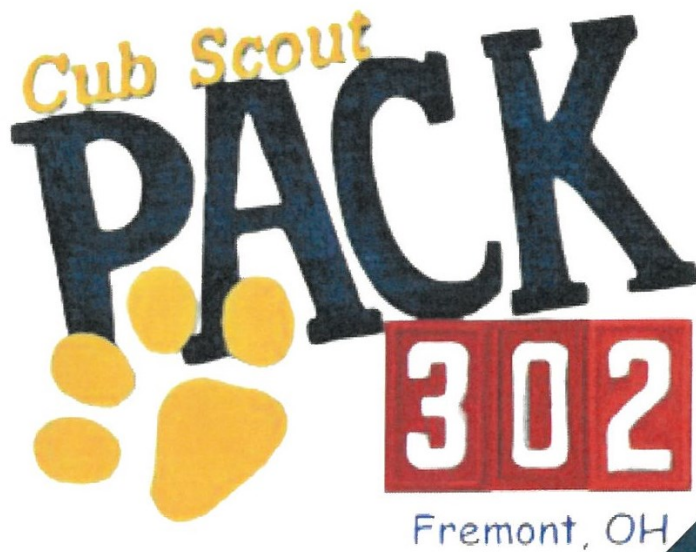
Pack 302 saw a significant increase in its membership in the fall of 2023, swelling from 24 to 58 scouts, adding 10 new scouts in 2024. Cub Scouting, also known as Wolf Cubs or Cubs, offers a program designed for children aged 5-11. Groups of Cubs are called "Packs", and participants are known as Cubs. The program is designed to help kids develop essential skills such as public speaking and safety, form lasting bonds, and conquer their fears. Additionally, it promotes self-assurance, reinforces ethical values, and prepares them to give back to their communities. The Bobcat Badge is the first achievement awarded to Cub Scouts. Most Cubs achieve the Bobcat rank within the first or second pack or den meeting.



THANK YOU



We sincerely appreciate the remarkable experience you have given us, facilitating a smooth transition and providing exceptional support throughout 2024. We are excited to collaborate on service initiatives with Grace Lutheran Church in the coming year, including the Free Little Library project, Scouting for Food, The P.R.A.Y. program and community yard cleanups. We look forward to broadening our efforts and reaching our objectives with the steadfast support of Grace Lutheran Church and its dedicated staff.



Christian Worship Committee

Committee Members:

Pastor C.J Bailey
Maureen Pump
Becky Seibert
Judy Overmyer
Tricia Dabrunz
Nate Leonard, Organist/Choir Director
Peggy Kiser, Chairperson

The worship committee meets monthly on the first Wednesday of the month at 2:30 p.m. Please note day and time change. The main focus of our committee is to review and enhance the worship service through liturgy and music.

The worship committee participated in worship in the court yard in July. We also held a brunch for the ushers and greeters in our congregation.

July and August we had 'Songs of the Summer Series' during worship.

In August, a meet and greet was held for Pastor Bailey.

In observance of Labor Day, the congregation was invited to wear what they wear to work to worship.

In October an installation service was held for Pastor Bailey.

Worship for Christmas Eve's services included a skit and some new music selections. Also a combined Lift worship service was held at Trinity United Methodist church.

Our thanks to Susan for her musical talents as our organist. Also to Pastor Bogen for his leadership.

We welcome Nate as our new organist and as a member of the worship committee.

We welcome any suggestions, comments or concerns you may have. Please feel free to contact any of the committee members.

Sincerely,

Peggy Kiser

Altar Guild 2024

In the words of Episcopal Bishop Curry, “People go to church to refocus. Focus on God. What you do for God matters. The altar guild helps us to refocus. Focus on God the Creator then follow Jesus into the world.” The altar guild is charged with this awesome responsibility and privilege of tending to the Sanctuary and enabling our congregation to engage in worship that is filled with order, beauty, peace, and tranquility.

Altar Guild is a ministry of “quiet service.” It says something about how we care for what we do as well as how we care for people. It tells us that every detail has significance, and every task is important.

Altar Guild is not a social group. We don’t have potlucks; we seldom have meetings. We are not involved in the business of the church. We don’t take votes or make momentous decisions. Most of what we do is invisible to the congregation and is meant to be that way. The work we do facilitates and enhances our worship and particularly the Eucharist.

Altar Guild is responsible for tasks such as: Preparing and maintaining the altar per the Church calendar year, Setting the table with the elements (bread and wine) to be administered during communion, Laundering and ironing altar and worship linens, polishing brass and silver, ensuring that all candles are in good operating order as well as maintaining the Baptismal font. Cleaning up after services and either preparing for another service or “closing down” for the day.

Pre-prepared individual wine/wafer sealed cups continue to be offered for those who wish to commune in the pew and for those attending car church.

We thank the men and women who have served this past year. While altar guilds can trace their roots to the women who cared for Jesus, today, anyone can be a member of the altar guild. You do not need to have any experience to serve. You will be paired with an experienced member and serve together. There are many ways to serve. Some of which are preparing communion, changing the paraments as the church calendar dictates and keeping the candles in good working order. You are welcome to be a part of this quiet way of service. Service on altar guild is flexible to your schedule, serving either in preparation or conclusion of worship. This is a great opportunity to work with your son or daughter and a wonderful family experience in service. Please contact the church office or any Altar Guild member for any questions or to volunteer.

Respectfully submitted,

Becky Seibert

Christian Stewardship Committee

Committee members: Cecilia Boucher, Council Member
Kathy Burmeister
John Avers
Ed Muffler
Maureen Pump
Pastor Clayton Bailey

The Stewardship Committee theme this year was about “Faithfulness”. Preparation for the Fall Campaign began in late summer and was shared with the congregation the month of November.

Post-it Notes were placed in the weekly bulletin coinciding with Bible verses designed to prompt each of us to answer - - how are we doing in different areas of faithfulness? It was a blessing to read the responses and the Committee was truly humbled.

2025 holds exciting upcoming events! In September 2025, we plan to build beds for the children in our community who do not currently have one! Fundraisers planned at this time are an adult Valentine’s Day Dinner on February 14, and later in June, a Cornhole Tournament at Copper Whale Winery.

We will continue to pray together and encourage all of us to give in the areas of our time, talents, and resources.

In Christ,

Cecilia Boucher

Christian Property Committee

Property Committee Members:

John Burmeister, Jerry Letzring, Greg Jess, Jim Post (Staff)

The Property Committee maintains and upgrades the property of Grace Lutheran Church. Our property is beautiful and full of history that requires regular upkeep and at times significant projects. Your Property Committee is also responsible for contracts that provide insurance, electric, and natural gas for the church. The committee encourages your ideas and concerns on how we may improve our property. Please feel free to contact any member.

COMPLETED PROJECTS FOR 2024

- CPR Training for staff and congregation
- Ability to use the organ through ipad and use of MIDI in absence of organist
- Replaced sanctuary door hardware
- Added programmable time for sanctuary entrance lights
- Added two (2) receptacles in fellowship area
- Removed unused chair lift
- Removed old concrete curbs and installed new curbs between main parking lot
- Made custom table for fellowship repurposing an unused pew
- Removed outdated outlying Grace signs
- Installed new LED lighting fixtures in kitchen and seating area
- Replaced kitchen ice machine
- Clover Street curb repair
- Sealed and re-stripped all three parking lots
- Annual PM on boiler radiators
- Installed three (3) autoflush valves
- Resurfaced conference room table
- Purchased a second AED for Noah's Ark and Dining Room (anonymous donor)

(Christian Property Committee continued.)

- Replaced step anti-slip and visibility tape
- Replaced carpet , paint, furniture in Senior Pastor's office
- Replaced hot water heater

FUTURE PROJECTS *(not in priority order)*

- Replace kitchen seating area ceiling tiles
- Repair damaged wall in kitchen
- Replace door hardware on doors that access the courtyard
- Revisit outlying sign replacement
- Install church security system that will include smoke and water detection and surge protection
- Complete main office and hallway carpeting replacement
- Check functionality of pulpit and lectern lighting
- Repaint non-parking areas on curbs
- Add cold weather frame and clear panels for sanctuary women's restroom
- Minor building PM projects; including tuckpoint altar window, seal Baker Street approach, replace missing slate, inspection of suspect areas

Property would like to thank everyone who has given time and energy on some of the completed projects, and to those working behind the scenes to keep our church maintained. The church is a large facility with many working systems that are being maintained with a small team of dedicated folks. The committee asks that you continue to donate your time and talents to continue making Grace a welcome place of worship.

Donations are welcome and can be received using the "Building for Our Future" envelopes.

Greg Jess, Chairman
Property Committee

GLCW - Grace Lutheran Church Women

President: Jan Harris
Secretary:
Treasurer: Janet Dorr
Mission Action -
Project Day/
Lutheran World Relief: Jan Harris

The mission statement for the women of the ELCA:

To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.

GLCW is made up of the GLCW Board and Joy Circle. The Board meets only as needed throughout the year. Joy Circle meets on the third Tuesday of the month, January through June, and September through November. In July, they usually have a retreat with entertainment and a work project. At Christmas time, they collect money and donate it to an agency that supports helping others. Joy Circle is a great group of approximately 13 women who meet in the church Lounge for Bible study and fellowship. They are a friendly group always ready to welcome new members at anytime.

Project Day volunteers meet the first and third Mondays each month at 9am, January through May and September through December. New volunteers are always welcome! Come when you are able! The Project Day ladies continue to create beautiful quilts from the donated fabrics and sheets. The quilts decorate the pews in the sanctuary on Thankoffering weekend in September. These quilts along with donated items for personal care, baby care, and school kits are then packed and shipped to LWR centers. This past year 2024, we shipped 19 sewing kits, 35 school kits, and 24 quilts. The support of this congregation towards this mission is amazing - THANK YOU! In addition, we have put aside additional quilts (seven (7) and counting!) for the upcoming Let's Build Beds project that will happen in September 2025!

All women of Grace Lutheran Church are invited to participate in all GLCW functions. We are always looking for more women to get involved with our GLCW activities.

GLCW continues to support the various ministries of Grace Lutheran Church, our community, and our world by donating time, talents, and financial support as we are able. If we see a need, we try to find the means to offer support helping to make our community and world a better place by loving our neighbors - both near and far.

As we look forward to 2025, please consider getting involved with the GLCW family. All are welcome to come and be a part using the gifts God gave us to do His work.

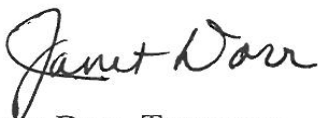
Respectfully submitted,

Jan Harris, GLCW President

GLCW - Treasurer's Report 2024

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH WOMEN TREASURER'S REPORT – 2024

2023 Carry Over Balance		\$ 3,179.85
INCOME:		
Worship offerings	\$ 219.93	
Funeral dinner donations	150.00	
Thank Offering donations	<u>340.00</u>	
	709.93	\$ <u>709.93</u>
		\$ 3,889.78
EXPENSES:		
Women of the ELCA		
60% Worship offerings to Synod	131.96	
Batting for LWR quilts	176.25	
Thank Offering donations to		
Women of the ELCA	340.00	
Men In Mission (2) radio broadcasts	145.00	
ELCA Spring Conference donation	50.00	
ELCA Fall Conference donation	50.00	
Gifts of \$50 each to: Genacross, LSS, Filling		
Home of Mercy, Lutheran Home of		
Mercy, and Grace Soup Kitchen	<u>250.00</u>	
	\$ 1,143.21	\$ <u>1,143.21</u>
		\$ 2,746.57
Balance on Hand	December 31st, 2024	\$ 2,746.57



Janet Dorr, Treasurer
Grace Lutheran Church Women

Men in Mission Radio Ministry

The Radio Ministry for Grace Lutheran Church continues to play a role in providing different alternatives for individuals to experience church worship services.

A great big THANK YOU to those who have so graciously sponsored broadcasts in memory of or in honor of someone they love or for some special occasion during the past year. We continue to have good interest and feedback from the congregation for the radio ministry.

We continue to record the Saturday 4PM service at Grace, then that is aired on the Fremont Eagle 99.1 radio station at 9:30AM on Sunday morning.

This is a positive ministry and benefit for a number of people in our community.

Anyone wishing to sponsor a radio broadcast, the cost remains at \$72.50 and checks should be made out to "Men in Mission". Please contact Les or Marcella Widmer at the following email or phone numbers. If you want specific Sundays, you can reserve those in advance.

Les; 419-341-1850; widmerleslie@gmail.com; Marcella: 419--307-5227

Sincerely;

Les Widmer

Soup Kitchen

2024 was another good year in the Soup Kitchen! We were open for 46 weeks and served over 1761 meals to an average of 40 people each week!

The Soup Kitchen is a community program that is operated solely on donations and volunteers. Our core group of volunteers consists of 6-8 individuals. St. Joe's and Memorial Hospital both have teams of volunteers that help monthly. This fall, Wendt-Key Team Realty group joined in the monthly rotation. Our volunteers work tirelessly with complete dedication. They are a vital part of the Soup Kitchen; we couldn't do what we do without them!

In 2024, the Soup Kitchen was once again a recipient of the annual "Stamp Out Hunger" Post Office food drive. What a blessing for the many items collected!

Donations are always welcome - whether it be food or monetary - we are grateful to be able to provide this ministry to our community. If you would like to volunteer in the Soup Kitchen, please contact the church office at 419-332-1558. If you would like to give a monetary donation, please make your check payable to Grace Lutheran Church and note SOUP KITCHEN in the memo line.

With the resignation of Nancy Ewing, we extend our sincere thanks and gratitude to Marcella Widmer and Laurie Black for overseeing meal planning and preparation. We also most recently have welcomed Tracy Michles as lead cook!

In 2025, we look forward to carrying on this ministry for anyone who is in need of a meal and a friendly smile!

Thank you all for your continued support!

Endowment Board - 2023

Endowment Board - 2024

C.J. Bailey, Pastor (ex-officio)
 Mark Gedeon, elected by the Congregation
 Ruthann House, appointed by Church Council
 Barry Luse, Vice Chair, appointed Investment Advisor
 Al Mehlow, Chair, elected by the Congregation
 Matt Moss, Secretary, elected by the Congregation
 Bill Wingard, Treasurer, appointed Legal Representative
 Lori Wise, elected by the Congregation

The Endowment Fund was established in response to the blessings and abundance of gifts provided to Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Endowment Fund recognizes the need to extend the Life, Mission, and Outreach of the Church through financial support to the congregation, the community, and worldwide organizations. Contributions are received for investment and the return on that investment is used to support a variety activities. The actual 2024 disbursements and the planned disbursements in 2025 are as follow:

<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	
\$25,000	\$10,000	LIFT - supports LIFT ministries
3,000	1,500	Camino de Vida - local Hispanic ministry
	3,000	Bridge of Hope - food pantry at Hayes Memorial United Methodist Church
	1,500	Let's Build Beds - upcoming service project
10,450	10,500	Sent with the Spirit to Serve Others - Grace Lutheran Church mission outreach
	5,000	Soup Kitchen - held at Grace Lutheran Church
	4,750	Emergent Benevolent Causes - to support causes when emergencies arise
3,750	4,000	Lutheran Home Society (Genacross) - senior living, youth care, outpatient services
4,500	4,750	Lutheran Social Services - assistance and counseling programs
1,800	2,000	Mexico City Missionary - supports Pastor Brondos
500	500	Special Festival - disciple celebration

Additionally, a matching contribution of \$125,000 to the Capital Campaign (Preserving Our Past and Embracing Our Future) approved by the Endowment Board in 2019 was distributed in 2024 to help fund ongoing capital projects.

Al Mehlow, Chair

Account Name: Grace Lutheran Church Endowment

January 01, 2024 through December 31, 2024

ACCOUNT SUMMARY

Beginning Market Value: \$ 1,219,524.81

Receipts:

Cash Deposits: 0.00

Asset Deposits: 0.00

Total Receipts: 0.00

Payments:

Disbursements: -174,379.47

Withdrawals and Distributions: 0.00

Administrative Expenses: - 8,387.98

Total Payments: - 182,767.45

Investment Income:

Tax Free Income: 0.00

Taxable Interest: 0.00

Dividends: 40,275.20

Return of Capital: 0.00

Other Income: 0.00

Total Investment Income: 40,275.20

Investment Growth: 60,162.01

Total Investment Growth: 60,162.01

Ending Market Value: \$ 1,137,194.57

**NOAH'S ARK PRESCHOOL
TREASURER'S REPORT
TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31,
2024**

Balance as of January 1, 2024 \$ 93,816.86

RECEIPTS:

Tuition	\$ 26,126.50	
Registration	575.00	
Art Fees	865.00	
Fundraiser/Class Pictures/Videos	969.80	
Donations	1,415.00	
Miscellaneous	88.08	
Grant	-	
Total Receipts	-	30,039.38

Total Receipts plus Beginning Balance 123,856.24

DISBURSEMENTS:

Salaries	32,253.97	
Payroll Taxes & Workers Comp	2,584.03	
Office Supplies	514.10	
School Supplies	-	
Advertising	-	
Staff Seminar/Training	110.07	
Fundraiser Costs	990.00	
Payroll Service	275.00	
Tuition Assistance	420.00	
Miscellaneous	108.93	
Net Employee Taxes Remitted for the Year	111.66	
Total Expenditures	-	37,367.76

Balance as of December 31, 2024* \$ 86,488.48

*Respectfully submitted,
Linda L. Baumer, Treasurer*

* Includes Tuition Assistance Fund Balance \$ 2,783.08

**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
TREASURER'S REPORT
TWELVE MONTHS ENDED DECEMBER 31,
2024**

Balance in General Fund as of January 1, 2024	\$ 126,058.61
Transfer from General Fund for December 2023 Designated Funds Activity	(93,112.12)
Adjusted Balance in General Fund as of January 1, 2024	32,946.49

RECEIPTS:

Envelopes, Pledges	\$ 353,710.96	
Loose Offering	6,187.16	
Seasonal Offerings	10,101.25	
Noisy Offering	2,526.30	
General Fund-Undesignated	10,879.26	
Endowment Gift	49,000.00	
Checking/Investment Interest	9,542.17	
Released from Contingency Reserve	25,000.00	
Released from Designated Accounts	115,888.79	
Total Receipts	582,835.89	

Total Receipts plus Beginning Balance	615,782.38
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Net Deposits in Clearing Account for the Year	1,719.98	
Net Employee Taxes & Pension Withheld for the Year	-	
	1,719.98	

Total Receipts, Taxes, Withholding, and Balance	617,502.36
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DISBURSEMENTS:

Expense Items	605,841.40	
Net Payments from Clearing Account for the Year	-	
Net Employee Taxes Remitted & Pension Paid for the Year	1,007.00	
Transfer to Contingency Reserve	-	
Total Expenditures	606,848.40	

Balance in General Fund as of December 31, 2024	\$ 10,653.96
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COMPARATIVE BALANCES

	December 31, 2023	December 31, 2024
General Fund	\$ 126,058.61	\$ 10,653.96
Designated Special and Miscellaneous	1,531,480.07	1,681,675.76
Contingency Reserve	141,360.22	16,360.22
Interest on Designated Accounts	48,905.45	118,973.74
Tressel Memorial Scholarship	1,278.66	1,278.66
TOTAL	\$ 1,849,083.01	\$ 1,828,942.34

FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND CHARITABLE GIVING

ORGANIZATION	BUDGETED	GIVING
ELCA Synod & Churchwide	\$ 25,500.00	\$ 25,500.00
Hispanic Ministry / Pastor Brondos	1,800.00	1,800.00
L.I.F.T.	28,000.00	28,000.00
Genacross (Lutheran Homes Society)	3,750.00	3,750.00
Lutheran Social Services	4,500.00	4,500.00
TOTAL	\$ 63,550.00	\$ 63,550.00

CONTINGENCY RESERVE FUND

BALANCE, JANUARY 1, 2024		\$ 141,360.22
RECEIPTS:		
2023 End of Year Excess	\$ -	
Total Receipts		-
TOTAL BALANCE & RECEIPTS		<u>\$ 141,360.22</u>
DISBURSEMENTS:		
to General Fund	\$ 25,000.00	
Write-off GWG Investment	<u>100,000.00</u>	
Total Disbursements		125,000.00
BALANCE, DECEMBER 31, 2024		<u><u>\$ 16,360.22</u></u>

TRESSEL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

BALANCE, JANUARY 1, 2024		\$ 1,278.66
RECEIPTS:		
Interest, etc.	\$ -	
Total Receipts		-
TOTAL BALANCE & RECEIPTS		<u>\$ 1,278.66</u>
DISBURSEMENTS:		
Pastor Education/Retreat	\$ -	
Total Disbursements		-
BALANCE, DECEMBER 31, 2024		<u><u>\$ 1,278.66</u></u>

DESIGNATED SPECIAL AND MISCELLANEOUS FUNDS

2024

Fund	Beginning Balance 1/1/2024	Receipts	Expenses	Ending Balance 12/31/2024
Charity	\$ 179.00	\$ 91.00	\$ -	\$ 270.00
Library	571.36	-	-	571.36
World Hunger	-	-	-	-
Flowers/Landscaping	524.48	3,803.41	235.53	4,092.36
Organ Fund	16,000.00	-	-	16,000.00
Music Miscellaneous	1,880.00	25.00	-	1,905.00
Sunday School Mission Fund	-	35.00	-	35.00
Youth Fund	41,843.18	21,813.70	34,325.48	29,331.40
Toledo Symphony Sponsorship	31,776.78	15,791.00	16,559.73	31,008.05
Global Mission-Yellow Envelope	1,363.00	1,102.00	1,365.00	1,100.00
My Brother's Keeper	31,180.88	2,402.00	4,646.36	28,936.52
Funeral Meals	148.74	1,925.00	1,564.71	509.03
Wm. F. Beck Caring Fund	1,259.26	5,000.00	721.58	5,537.68
Weddings	964.26	970.00	850.00	1,084.26
Sanctuary Air Conditioning	116,851.41	-	-	116,851.41
Kitchen Air Conditioning	7,058.14	-	-	7,058.14
Capital Campaign Fund	-	-	-	-
Building for the Future	20,295.64	4,078.00	-	24,373.64
Soup Kitchen	5,878.18	9,013.59	7,990.21	6,901.56
Capital Campaign Pledges	250.00	-	-	250.00
Altar Guild	553.96	-	100.38	453.58
Technology	-	-	-	-
GLC General Scholarship	6,565.82	-	1,000.00	5,565.82
Special Events	1,577.30	-	-	1,577.30
Memorials	1,244,508.01	224,882.11	71,377.14	1,398,012.98
New Hymnals	250.67	-	-	250.67
TOTAL	\$ 1,531,480.07	\$ 290,931.81	\$ 140,736.12	\$ 1,681,675.76

**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
2025 PROPOSED BUDGET**

		2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2025 Budget
INCOME				
10-01	Offerings	\$ 410,000	\$ 353,711	\$ 400,000
10-20	Loose	7,000	6,177	7,000
10-25	Sunday School	-	-	-
10-30	Seasonal	6,000	10,111	6,000
10-32	Noisy Offering	2,500	2,526	2,500
10-33	General Fund Undesignated	6,000	10,879	7,500
10-34	Endowment	49,000	49,000	47,500
10-35	Checking/Investment Interest	4,800	9,542	6,000
20-20	Released from Designated Accounts	29,400	140,889	23,450
	Total Income	\$ 514,700	\$ 582,835	\$ 499,950
EXPENSES				
<i>Minor 10 - World Mission</i>				
10	ELCA Synod	\$ 25,500	\$ 25,500	\$ 25,500
20	Lutheran Homes	3,750	3,750	4,000
30	Lutheran Social Services	4,500	4,500	4,750
40	Local Mission/Noisy Offering	2,500	1,778	2,500
41	Missionary Support	1,800	1,800	2,000
42	Disciple Celebration	500	14	500
43	Other (Emergent Benevolent Causes)	-	-	4,750
	World Mission	\$ 38,550	\$ 37,342	\$ 44,000
<i>Minor 20 - Local Mission</i>				
15	Spirit	\$ -	\$ 1,228	\$ -
20	Youth	23,700	34,853	15,500
25	Soup Kitchen	-	7,522	10,000
35	Christian Missions/Outreach Committee	1,000	3,771	2,500
40	Stewardship	500	20	500
45	L.I.F.T.	28,000	28,000	16,000
62	My Brothers Keeper	1,200	4,646	1,500
	Local Mission	\$ 54,400	\$ 80,040	\$ 46,000
<i>Minor 30 - Worship</i>				
20	Bulletin, Church Literature	\$ 700	\$ 290	\$ 250
30	Contribution Envelopes	1,000	698	700
40	Altar & Sacramental	700	1,119	700
50	Organ & Piano Maintenance	-	101	750
60	Music / Vestment / Maintenance	3,200	127	2,000
75	Worship Expenses	1,298	2,638	1,500
80	Christian Worship Committee	240	-	250
	Worship	\$ 7,138	\$ 4,973	\$ 6,150
<i>Minor 40 - Christian Education</i>				
21	Continuing Education - Pastors	\$ 240	\$ 317	\$ 2,000
50	Miscellaneous Christian Education	240	214	250
	Christian Education	\$ 480	\$ 531	\$ 2,250

**GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
2025 PROPOSED BUDGET**

		2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2025 Budget
<i>Minor 50 - Operations & Maintenance</i>				
20	Janitorial Supplies	\$ 2,100	\$ 2,949	\$ 2,500
30	Natural Gas	17,250	10,549	12,000
35	Electric	16,500	16,477	17,000
36	Water	2,400	2,622	2,500
37	Waste Disposal	1,740	2,715	3,000
40	Telephone	1,536	1,681	1,700
50	Insurance	23,302	26,142	28,765
65	Property, Repairs & Maintenance	13,593	110,707	15,000
	Operations & Maintenance	\$ 78,421	\$ 173,842	\$ 82,465
<i>Minor 60 - Salaries & Related</i>				
10	Senior Pastor Salary	\$ 41,474	\$ 35,480	\$ 58,000
11	Senior Pastor Housing	28,542	20,154	26,000
12	Senior Pastor Travel	600	296	750
13	Senior Pastor Pension & Medical	25,531	17,087	46,250
30	Visitation Pastor Salary	-	-	-
31	Visitation Pastor Travel	-	-	-
55	Clergy/Organist Substitute	1,338	2,293	1,500
65	Staff Payroll	222,492	190,275	170,000
72	Staff Pension	7,077	6,937	5,500
	Salaries & Related	\$ 327,054	\$ 272,522	\$ 308,000
<i>Minor 70 - Administration</i>				
20	Postage	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,795	\$ 3,000
25	Payroll Service	1,860	2,265	2,275
30	Office Equipment & Maintenance	3,828	4,728	4,000
40	Office Supplies	2,700	2,393	2,750
45	Technology Support/Maintenance	2,414	4,915	2,500
	Administration	\$ 13,202	\$ 17,096	\$ 14,525
<i>Minor 80 - Miscellaneous</i>				
10	FICA & Worker's Comp	\$ 18,055	\$ 16,167	\$ 15,000
15	Synod Assembly	300	300	300
22	Employee Mileage	300	248	300
40	Miscellaneous	300	2,780	300
	Miscellaneous	\$ 18,955	\$ 19,495	\$ 15,900
	Total Expenses	\$ 538,200	\$ 605,841	\$ 519,290
	Income less Expenses	\$ (23,500)	\$ (23,006)	\$ (19,340)

2024 PATTERN OF ANNUAL GIVING

2023 DONORS	2024 DONORS	AMOUNT
20	15	0.01 to 50.00
8	10	50.01 to 100.00
53	41	100.01 to 500.00
29	29	500.01 to 1000.00
60	66	1000.01 to 3000.00
27	19	3000.01 to 5000.00
10	10	5000.01 to 7000.00
1	3	7000.01 to 10000.00
6	3	10000.01 to 15000.00

RESOLUTION #1 – CHURCH BUDGET

Whereas, the Executive Committee and the Church Council have proposed a budget for the 2025 calendar year after careful review, discussion, and prayer; and

Whereas, the input of the Congregation has been sought;

Therefore, be it resolved that the 2025 Proposed Budget be adopted at this Congregational Meeting, and that we, as Grace Lutheran Church and its individual members, respond faithfully and responsibly with our offerings so that this budget may be met.

RESOLUTION #2 – CHURCH VOLUNTEERS

Whereas, this Congregation depends upon its people to share their time, energy, and enthusiasm to advance the ministry of the Church and its mission; and

Whereas, these people deserve our acknowledgment, appreciation, and respect;

Therefore, be it firmly resolved that we thank our many volunteers for their gracious hours of service, which have contributed to the ministry of Grace Lutheran Church in education, music, youth, worship, evangelism, property, finance, and office administration during the 2025 calendar year.

RESOLUTION #3 – CHURCH STAFF

Whereas, the following individuals have sought to serve their Lord through their work at Grace Lutheran Church, Noah's Ark Preschool, and LIFT, as paid staff members: and

Whereas, our congregation should acknowledge and appreciate their efforts;

Therefore, be it resolved that we extend our sincere gratitude to all members of these staffs for their faithfulness and dedication for the 2024 calendar year. They are, as named below,

Pr. Clayton Bailey, Pr. Paul Bailie, Susan Barker, Linda Baumer, Pr. Mark Bogen, Tricia Dabrunz, Nancy Ewing, Michaelle Goodman, Heather Hawn, Andrea Hirt, Hyo Jung Kim, Gregg Kinsey, Nate Leonard, Doug Morris, Jim Post, Susan Sawdo, Maureen Pump.

And be it further resolved that we acknowledge with gratitude the efforts of the following people who served on the staff of Grace and whose time of service came to an end during 2024:

Pr. Paul Bailie, Susan Barker, Pr. Mark Bogen, Nancy Ewing, Hyo Jung, Kim, Doug Morris

And be it further resolved that we continue to support, pray for, and work in partnership together as a Congregation and church staff to the Glory of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lift Parish LLC
Operating Agreement

Approved by all Full Member Congregations and
in force as of 2/2020

Fundamental Charitable Purpose. Notwithstanding anything herein to the contrary, the organization is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended. All provisions herein shall be subject to such purpose.

1) Definitions

- a) **"LIFT"** means "Living In Faith Together"
- b) **"Grace"** means Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fremont, Ohio
- c) **"St. John's"** means St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fremont, Ohio
- d) **"Faith"** means Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fremont, Ohio
- e) **"St. Mark"** means St. Mark Evangelical Lutheran Church of Fremont, Ohio
- f) **"Trinity"** means Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Kingsway, Ohio
- g) **"Emmanuel"** means Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Hessville, Ohio
- h) **"Ministry Teams"** means the members of the congregations of LIFT who regularly help to plan and carry out mission and/or mission support activities in a particular area
- i) **"ELCA"** means the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America or its successor body
- j) **"NWOS"** means the Northwest Ohio Synod of the ELCA, or its successor body
- k) **"Worshiping Community"** means a group of persons regularly gathered around word and sacrament
- l) **"LIFT Parish"** means the sum of all those congregations and worshiping communities that have approved these Articles of Agreement pursuant according to its terms
- m) **"LIFT Parish Board"** **"LIFT Board"** or **"Board"** shall mean the managing Council responsible for managing the cooperative ministry of the LIFT Parish under this agreement.
- n) **"Code"** means the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended ("Code").

2) Name of Organization

The organization shall be known as **"Lift Parish, LLC,"** but may be referred to internally as "LIFT Cooperative Ministry Parish" or "LIFT Parish".

3) Purpose

The purpose of the organization is to further Code Sec. 501(c)(3) exempt religious, charitable, and educational purposes allowable under Code Sec. 501(c)(3) of its members by sharing resources and opportunities for mission and ministry, to grow disciples of Jesus Christ, to discern a shared vision for God's mission in the Greater Fremont area, and to share the good news of God's love in Jesus Christ with our community and with the world.

4) Membership Eligibility & Forfeiture

- (a) Eligibility. Any member organization must be organized and operated under Code Sec. 501(c)(3) exclusively for religious, charitable, or educational purposes, or be an agency or instrumentality of the United States, any State or political subdivision thereof.
- (b) Forfeiture. Should a member cease to be organized and operated under Code Sec. 501(c)(3) exclusively for religious, charitable, or educational purposes then it shall forfeit

its membership.

5) Membership Transfer Prohibition

No member may transfer its membership without the prior written consent of the other members; provided always, any transferee shall be organized and operated under Code Sec. 501(c)(3) exclusively for religious, charitable, or educational purposes, or be an agency or instrumentality of the United States, any State or political subdivision thereof.

6) Enforcement by Members

The members shall expeditiously and vigorously enforce all of their rights in the organization and pursue all legal and equitable remedies to protect their interests in the organization.

7) Prohibitions

- (a) No part of the earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, directors, officers or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for goods and services rendered.
- (b) No substantial part of the activities of the organization may consist of carrying on propaganda or attempting to influence legislation.
- (c) The organization shall not participate in, or otherwise intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements), any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

8) Transfer of Assets - Fair Market Value Required

- (a) Transfer of Assets to Non-Member. Any asset of the organization may only be transferred (directly or indirectly) for fair market value to any non-member organization that is not a Code Sec. 501(c)(3) organization or an agency or instrumentality of the United States, any State or political subdivision thereof.
- (b) Transfer to Former Member. Any asset of the organization may only be transferred (directly or indirectly) for fair market value to a former member organization that ceases to be a Code Sec. 501(c)(3) organization or an agency or instrumentality of the United States, any State or political subdivision thereof.

9) Guidelines

In pursuit of this purpose, we will:

- (a) proclaim Jesus as Lord in word and deed
- (b) be guided by scripture and led by the Holy Spirit
- (c) be open to God's work in and around us
- (d) love one another, respect one another and pray for one another
- (e) pray and worship together regularly
- (f) speak the truth in love and listen to one another in love
- (g) be flexible and open to change
- (h) respect and honor the gifts of each congregation and the gifts and ministries of the parish as a whole

- (i) maintain a cooperative relationship with the overall area mission strategy of the Eastern Conference and Northwest Ohio Synod of the ELCA.
- 10) Parish Administration / Management**
- a) LIFT Parish Board. The LIFT Cooperative Ministry Parish shall be managed by the LIFT Parish Board. The voting members of the LIFT Parish Board shall include the following:
 - (1) Two lay members each from congregations participating as full members of the LIFT Parish.
 - (2) One lay member total from among worshipping communities not part of a congregation.
 - (3) All of the pastors of LIFT and LIFT full member congregations, ex officio.
 - b) In general, each lay member shall serve for a two-year term. However, at the initiation of this agreement, half the lay members of the LIFT Parish Board shall be elected to a two-year term and the other half to a three-year term. Thereafter, each lay LIFT Board member will be selected annually, to a two-year term.
 - c) Term Limit. Members may serve consecutive terms, except that no one elected under section a) (1) shall serve more than 3 consecutive terms.
 - d) Associate Membership. Upon request, the LIFT Board may designate a congregation or worshipping community cooperating in any LIFT ministries as an Associate Member of the LIFT Parish. When so designated, a lay representative and pastor of the Associate Member may attend Board meetings and have voice but not vote. Where funds are exchanged; or joint staff hired or called, the terms of cooperation will be described in a written cooperative ministry plan. LIFT congregations may continue to participate in LIFT ministries as an associate member of the Parish even if the congregation does not vote to become a LIFT Parish Member under the terms of Section 7.
 - (e) Quorum. A quorum of the LIFT Board is a majority of LIFT Board voting members.
 - (f) Responsibilities. The LIFT Parish Board will:
 - (i) oversee and provide for the administration of this parish to enable it to fulfill its functions and perform its mission,
 - (ii) promote peace and goodwill and, as differences and conflicts arise, endeavor to foster mutual understanding,
 - (iii) have general oversight of the life and activities of this parish,
 - (iv) lead this parish by stating its mission, doing long-range planning, setting goals and priorities, and evaluating its activities in light of its mission and goals,
 - (v) provide for incorporation as a nonprofit Limited Liability Corporation,
 - (g) Frequency. The LIFT Parish board will meet at least quarterly.
 - (h) Officers
 - (i) The LIFT Board will elect a vice- chairperson annually to serve one year as vice-chair and one year as chair.
 - (ii) The LIFT Board will elect a secretary annually.
 - (iii) The treasurer shall be elected by a 2/3 majority of the LIFT board. The treasurer shall

serve a two-year term. The treasurer need not be a member of the LIFT board, and if not a member, shall have voice but not vote in the meetings of the LIFT board.

- (iv) The Treasurer shall:
 - (A) prepare and submit regular financial reports to the LIFT Parish Board.
 - (B) assist in the preparation of the annual budget of the parish.
 - (C) keep the bank accounts for the parish.
 - (D) keep the books of account of the parish.
 - (E) disburse all funds on proper orders as designated by the LIFT Board.
 - (F) take the necessary steps to protect this LIFT Board and its members from liability.
- (v) An independent audit of the books of the parish shall be conducted annually.

11) Authority

- a) Parish. The authority of the LIFT Parish rests with the LIFT Parish Board, who is responsible to develop parish ministry plans and strive to implement those plans. The LIFT Board has authority to set the compensation package for parish staff in accordance with the compensation guidelines of the Northwest Ohio Synod of the ELCA.
- b) Congregations. Nothing in this agreement shall diminish or undermine the identity and authority of a participating congregation, including the authority to make its own decisions, hire its own staff, call its own pastor or make other decisions regarding their individual congregations.
- c) Worshiping Communities not part of Congregations. LIFT Worshiping Communities which are not a part of any LIFT congregation shall have the autonomy and authority and representation as defined in a written ministry plan approved by the LIFT Board, as it may be revised from time to time.

12) Entry

A 2/3 majority vote of the members present and voting at a congregational meeting called in accordance with that congregation's constitution shall be required for that congregation to adopt these Agreement and enter the LIFT Parish. After the formation of the LIFT Parish, a majority vote of the members of the LIFT Parish Board shall be required for a church to enter the LIFT Parish, in consultation with the synod staff.

OR

A majority vote to adopt this agreement according to the polity of the church requesting membership in the LIFT Parish must be obtained. A majority vote of the members of the LIFT Parish Board shall be required for a church to enter the LIFT Parish, in consultation with the synod staff.

13) Effective Date

The organization's secretary shall certify the effective date of this agreement.

14) Responsibilities

- a) Pastoral Responsibilities. In keeping with the responsibilities of pastors as defined in the constitutions of the ELCA and the Letter of Call to Ordained Ministry, the pastors of this parish shall:

- i) Lead worship, including preaching, administration of the sacraments, marriages and funerals. Pastors may train and supervise lay assistants to assist them in these activities. Pastors shall rotate in their worship leadership in each of the congregations of the parish,
 - ii) Provide for and coordinate pastoral care, including visitation of and care for the sick, the homebound, the grieving, inactive and prospective members, and members of the broader community as appropriate,
 - iii) Engage in continuing education and professional development and share insights learned within the parish,
 - iv) Nurture relationships with and between the members of the parish,
 - v) Equip all the baptized to share in ministry and mission,
 - vi) Provide for Christian education in order to foster spiritual growth and discipleship, including confirmation/catechism classes, new member classes, regular Bible study, and teaching and modeling spiritual disciplines (prayer, tithing, fasting, meditation, etc.),
 - vii) Ensure that the records and rosters of the congregations and Parish are maintained annually.
- b) Congregational Responsibilities. The congregations of this parish shall:
- i) Practice wide-open and active hospitality, inviting others to participate in the life of the parish and welcoming guests in the name of Christ.
 - ii) Nurture relationships with one another and with the community at large.
 - iii) Engage in community outreach, including feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned, and caring for the least, the last, the lost and the lonely in the spirit of Matthew 25:31-46.
 - iv) Participate actively in the shared ministries of the parish and actively seek opportunities to share ministry with each other.
 - v) Engage in self-study to identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth.
 - vi) Actively seek to communicate to their members and to other congregations within the parish about their mission and ministry.
 - vii) Commit to welcoming and loving treatment of rostered leaders and their families and honor the ministries of all leaders within the parish.
 - viii) Seek to grow faithfully in their Mission Support to the Northwest Ohio Synod and the ministries of the broader church.
 - ix) Be good stewards of and make faithful use of buildings, grounds and other congregational assets.
 - x) Be accountable to one another in love as fellow workers in Christ.

- c) Responsibilities of All Baptized Members. Governed by a spirit of love, mercy and compassion in our life together, every baptized member will be encouraged to:
- (i) Attend worship regularly
 - (ii) Participate actively in the ministries of the parish and congregations
 - (iii) Participate in the Ministry Teams of the Lift Parish
(with the teams providing reports to the board)
 - A. Children, Youth and Family
 - B. Caring for Members and the Community
 - C. Worship and Music
 - D. Evangelism and Outreach
 - E. Hospitality and Fellowship
 - F. Property Support
 - G. Finance, Administration and Leadership Support
 - H. Stewardship
 - (iv) Participate in the Prayer and Discipleship groups of the Lift Parish
 - A. Faith Engagement
 - B. Equipping
 - C. Welcoming Diversity
 - D. Justice for our Neighbors
 - E. Sustainable Connections
 - (v) Grow in faith through:
 - A. daily prayer
 - B. regular study of Scripture
 - C. service in the congregations, community and wider world
 - D. generous giving and the intentional practice of Christian discipleship
 - E. be open-minded and willing to change

As followers of Jesus Christ, we will commit to love one another, serve one another, listen to one another, be honest with one another, care for one another, trust one another, challenge one another, encourage one another, hold one another accountable and receive every person as we would receive Jesus Christ.

15) **Call Process**

The call of a pastor to serve the parish shall be under the guidance of the Office of the Bishop of the Northwest Ohio Synod. There shall be a call committee for the parish, consisting of the senior pastors of each participating congregation and at least one lay member from each worshipping community, with no less than six nor more than twelve total members. The members of the call committee shall be elected by the respective congregation councils. A 2/3 majority vote of those present and voting at a combined Parish meeting called in accordance with each congregation's constitution for a congregational meeting shall be necessary for approval of the pastoral candidate. If the call is approved, the congregations authorize the LIFT Parish Board to issue the call. Mutual Ministry Committee

There shall be a Mutual Ministry Committee consisting of at least one member from each worshipping community in the parish, and no fewer than six nor more than 10 members. The members of the committee shall be selected in consultation between the rostered leaders and LIFT Board. The Mutual Ministry Committee will be affirmed by the LIFT Parish Board. The Mutual Ministry Committee shall facilitate communication and assist the rostered leaders of the parish and congregations in reviewing the ministry goals of the parish and the respective

congregations.

16) Shared Expenses

- a) The parish may share staff expenses as appropriate, including the compensation and benefits for:
 - i) rostered leaders, if applicable
 - ii) shared administrative staff, if applicable
 - iii) shared programmatic staff, if applicable
 - iv) shared musicians, if applicable
 - v) shared music director, if applicable

- b) The parish will seek, as much as possible, to share expenses related to programming of mission and ministry, such as, but not limited to:
 - i) office equipment and supplies
 - ii) software and licensing
 - iii) confirmation instruction
 - iv) youth ministry
 - v) music
 - vi) special events
 - vii) vehicles
 - viii) internet presence
 - ix) property management and insurance, as applicable
 - x) preschool

17) Pastor's Compensation

Compensation of pastors and rostered leaders serving the parish will be consistent with the Northwest Ohio Synod's Compensation Guidelines.

18) Finances

- (a) There shall be a parish treasury out of which the parish treasurer shall pay all expenses. An annual audit will be conducted independently and shared with the parish board and all congregations of the parish.

- (b) For the 2016 calendar year, the participating congregations will commit to contribute financially to the parish in specified amounts as determined by a budget committee, comprising at least the senior pastors and treasurers of each participating congregation, and presented at the congregation's annual meeting together with a description of the use of those funds.

19) Congregational contributions for future years will be established through annual Parish Congregational Budgets adopted by December 1 for the subsequent calendar year. Special Meetings

Special meetings of the parish may be called by the LIFT Board chairperson in consultation with the individual congregational council presidents and the pastors, or by any two board members.

20) Review and Changes

- (a) Method of Change. The participating congregations agree to an annual review of this agreement to be conducted in consultation with the senior pastors, the councils of the participating congregations and the Office of Bishop of the Northwest Ohio Synod. Changes or modifications to these Articles of Agreement may be made by a 2/3 vote of members of each congregation present and voting at congregational meetings or a parish-wide meeting, called in accordance with congregational constitutions. All proposals for changes shall be recommended by the parish board to each congregation council for congregational vote.
- (b) Limitation on Change. Any amendment to this agreement, or other governing document of the organization, shall comply with the rules, requirements, and limitations of Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

21) Terms of Dissolution/Termination

After consultation with the Office of the Bishop, termination of this agreement and dissolution of the organization by a congregation shall be by a 2/3 majority vote of the members of the congregation present and voting at a congregational meeting called in accordance with that congregation's constitution. Written notice will be given to the LIFT Board by July 1 of a congregation's intention to withdraw from the parish for the following calendar year.

22) Distribution of Assets Upon Dissolution/Termination

Upon termination and dissolution of the organization, all the assets of the organization shall be distributed either to: The Northwest Ohio Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or its successor, provided such organization is then organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, or religious purposes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code, or (ii) any other organization(s) which then qualifies as a exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

23) Merger / Conversion

The organization is prohibited from merging with any organization who is not exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code. Likewise, should the organization ever convert to another form of entity, such conversion is limited to an entity which qualifies as an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code.

24) Specific Arrangements/Other

Worship times shall be established in consultation between the congregations of the parish and the LIFT Board.

25) Incorporation

The LIFT Parish shall be incorporated under the laws of Ohio as a nonprofit limited liability corporation (LLC). This LIFT Parish, LLC shall be the congregation of record for any individuals within LIFT not otherwise members of any congregation of LIFT.

26) Merger

Merger of a participating congregation with this LIFT Parish, LLC shall require approval by the LIFT Board and each LIFT member congregation council.

LIFT Parish By Laws

Delegation of Authority

The Board hereby delegates to the Executive Committee (comprising the Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, Secretary and LIFT pastors) the taking of executive action on behalf of the Company, provided that:

- 1) the Board is notified of significant actions in advance
- 2) no board member requests full Board review.

The Board hereby delegates to the Finance and Administration mission support team, the taking of all routine administrative actions on behalf of the Company, provided the Executive Committee is kept informed and no member of that Executive Committee or the Board requests full review.

The Board hereby delegates to each Mission Team the taking of all actions within their area of responsibility, provided they keep the Executive Committee informed and coordinate and cooperate with the other mission teams that may be affected. Any Board member or alternate can request Board review and decision at any time, for any issue, where that person believes there may be a significant difference of opinion about the right decision, or where further consideration would be necessary or useful, and the request is made in writing to any member of the Executive Committee.

Approved by LIFT Board January 26, 2016

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

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

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

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

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

—Psalm 93:4-5

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



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