

Annual Report of the Congregation for the year 2025



IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
HOLDEN, MASSACHUSETTS

a Reconciling in Christ congregation

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**Annual Congregational Meeting
Immanuel Lutheran Church
January 25, 2026**

AGENDA

Words of Welcome	Greta Gridley, President
Prayer	Pastor Sarah Barnes
Call to Order	Greta Gridley, President
Verification of Quorum	Emmie Leotsakos, Secretary
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Prayer & Adjournment	Pastor Josh Ferris

Minutes from Immanuel Lutheran Church Annual Congregational Meeting
January 26, 2025

Bonnie Colon welcomed the congregation to the Annual Meeting and Pastor Sarah opened in prayer.

Meeting called to order at 10:55 a.m.

A quorum (10% of 253) was confirmed by Greta Gridley. 72 voting members present.

Mark Vetter moved to adopt the agenda for the annual meeting. Kathy Cranson seconded. All in favor.

Ken Cranson moved to accept the minutes from the 2024 Annual Meeting. Mary Jane Rasku seconded. All in favor.

Pastor Sarah's Annual Report: As Pastor Sarah looked back at the past year, she was amazed at all Immanuel's generosity, which truly shows where Immanuel's heart is. Highlights included the Malmstrom Trust, the Capital Campaign (which raised more than we set out to), the third-floor apartment, and weekly generosity. The congregation took part in Prayer Around the Cross in Lent, Care for Creation, Time and Talent Auction, CROP Walk, Meal Packaging, and weaving love that will not end. The generosity of the congregation was reflected in individuals caring for one another during hard times.

Pastor Josh's Annual Report: Pastor Josh talked about all the love we worked to weave together in 2025: the Capital Campaign, exploring a possible third-floor apartment to deepen our work with IHN and Abby's House, and more mission work than ever. The Meal Packaging Event, CROP Walk, Beverly School of Kenya, and the Garden of Feedin' were a few highlights. As Jim Anderson said to Pastor Josh: there were times when the congregation was bigger, but there is more joy now than ever. To God be the glory.

Bonnie thanked all the staff members for their hard work: Jen and Jen, Claire and Don. Bonnie encouraged the congregation to read all the reports submitted.

Jeff Swanberg reviewed the **Finance Reports**. Immanuel's income was over budget due to increased gym use, offerings, and interest. Immanuel's expenses were under budget due to lower costs for oil, maintenance and rubbish removal. The Centennial Fund has been used for solar panels, stained glass windows, church and parsonage HVAC, parsonage windows, and parsonage masonry. Active Memorial Funds provided organ refurbishment and a new paschal candle. The Mission Endowment and Malmstrom Legacy Funds have increased in value over the year.

After receiving reports, we discussed a change to **Immanuel's Constitution**. This change would allow the church council to authorize individual, non-budgeted expenses of up to 1% of Immanuel's yearly budget, with a total of 2% annually. The previous amount set for the council was too low, and the synod suggested making it a percentage of yearly budget rather than a dollar amount. Mark Vetter made the motion to amend the constitution. Seconded by Valeda Schmucki. All in favor.

We next moved to our annual **Mission Endowment Fund** distribution, which is \$10,200 in 2025. The full list of recipients is in the 2025 annual meeting packet and includes seven organizations. As this was brought before the congregation by the council, it only required a second, which was provided by Karen White. All in favor.

Jeff Swanberg presented the **2025 Proposed Budget**, which has \$460,600 in income, and \$460,520 in expenses. Seconded by Jeff Swanberg. All in favor.

Pastor Josh came forward to explain **proposed changes to bylaws** for our Active Memorial and Mission Endowment Funds, and the creation of the Malmstrom Legacy Fund. These changes give the Memorial Fund Committee responsibility for managing the Malmstrom Legacy Fund and increase the size of this group from three to five people. All the other changes to our Active Memorial and Mission Endowment Fund bylaws were made to create formatting consistency with the new Malmstrom Legacy Fund.

Jane English seconded the motion to change the Mission Endowment Fund bylaws. Karen White asked if Immanuel has an investment manager, and Pastor Josh answered that we use an advisor through Thrivent Financial. All in favor.

Jan Donadt seconded the motion to change the Memorial Fund bylaws. All in favor.

The new Malmstrom Legacy Fund is meant to provide for the ministries and needs of Immanuel. Every year, a minimum of 2.5% and a maximum of 3.5% of the fund's value will be used in the operating budget. Another 2.5%-3.5% will be used annually at the council's discretion to fund ministry, meet capital needs, etc. There is also a mechanism for the congregation to vote at a specially called meeting to authorize one-time, larger expenditures up to 13% of the fund's value if there are big needs or opportunities.

Creation of fund seconded by Sue Swanberg. Cynthia Cloutier questioned whether there will be something prepared in writing about Brita Malmstrom and Pastor Josh explained that there will be a pamphlet prepared regarding giving at Immanuel. All in favor.

The meeting then turned to **elections**. Greta Gridley moved to accept the nominations listed in the annual meeting packet: Gabriel Ellis and Alex Sprague as youth representatives on council; Fred Borchelt, Lauren Demerjian, Craig Lanquist, and Emmie Leotsakos as council representatives; Kenneth Cranson, Mary Donev, and Tom Wiegand as memorial fund committee members; Bill Peterson and Ian wood as audit committee members; Josh Greene, Kaylie Harrington, and Billy Lahey as nominating committee members. These nominations were seconded by Elaine Vetter. All in favor.

Pastor Sarah handed out gifts, in thanks for service on council, to: Sydney Demerjian, Kaylie Harrington, Bill Lahey, and Brian Welch.

At 11:50 a.m., Kathy Mills **moved to adjourn**. Cynthia Cloutier seconded. All in favor.

Pastor Josh closed in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Greta Gridley
Church Council Secretary

2025 Membership Statistics

Membership as of December 31, 2024

Baptized: 367

Confirmed: 290

Members Received during 2025 (27):

Holy Baptism (7):

Juliet Adams, Matthew Bardon, Charlotte Harrington, Josephine Leotsakos, Jackson Sharma, Robert Sharma Jr., Amelia Toomey

Transfer/Affirmation of Baptism (19):

Carl Adams, Joanna Adams, Matt Dewar, Demi Figueiredo, Karen Figueiredo, Mario Figueiredo, Niklas Figueiredo, Noah Figueiredo, Petra Figueiredo, Richard Grayson, Ruth Ingui, Joyce Kujala, Aidan Kupstas, Alan Lambert, Sandra Lambert, Lindsey Mastrototoro, Mollynda McArthur, Martha McCarthy, Michael McCarthy

Members Confirmed during 2025 (1):

Alex Sprague (received as new, baptized, and confirmed member!)

Members Removed during 2025 (36):

Death (7):

Edward Clarke, Gary Gaskin, Richard Gates, Mildred Gustafson, Beverly Landquist, Jeffrey Larson, Carl Mellor

Adjustment/Inactivity of 5+ Years (29)

Membership as of December 31, 2025

Baptized: 358

Confirmed: 276

Voting Members: 256

Voting members are individuals who are active, confirmed members of our church. Our constitution defines an “active” member as someone who has both received communion and contributed financially to our congregation within the last two calendar years.

From Immanuel’s Constitution: C10.04. – 10% of the voting members shall constitute a quorum.

At the end of each year, we review our records for accuracy and to determine if any inactive members of our church meet the threshold for “removal due to extended inactivity.” This means someone has been inactive for at least five years. This is reflected in the “adjustment/inactivity” number above.

Please note that while the phrase “removal due to extended inactivity” sounds intense, it is solely for administrative and reporting purposes. No name or information is ever deleted, and we are always glad to welcome people back as active participants in our church community!

Annual Report – Pastor Sarah Barnes

*O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
The earth is full of your creatures.*
Psalm 104:24

In confirmation, we have the tradition of sharing a high, a low, and a God moment at the end of each class. Sharing God moments can be tricky for new confirmation students. Most people are not used to sharing their daily experience of God with others. And yet, with time and practice, when we look for where God is at work, we start to see God all over the place! As I reflect on the past year at Immanuel, the joys we've celebrated, the losses we've mourned, and the community we've built, I see God all over the place (and I hope you do too!). While I can't recap the whole year in this annual report, I would like to share a few God moments from the past year. In the highs and the lows, God was with us through it all.

In January, we lost our oldest living member of Immanuel, Edward Clarke, who died just a few months shy of his 100th birthday. Ed Clarke had a scientific mind, and his faith was rooted in the ways that God had been present throughout his life. Ed's legacy continues at Immanuel. He was one of the founding members of the Spirituality for the Home Stretch group, which continues to meet each month. He was also major contributor to the Lenten Devotional, submitting over 100 reflections between 1999 and 2025 (he also was one of the chief recruiters who encouraged others to write and share their reflections). This year we also mourned the loss of loved ones who died in midlife, feeling a profound grief for years unlived. In our sorrow, we held and supported one another, finding ways to honor the legacy of those who packed their short number of years so full of adventure, passion, and love. We held on to the promise of resurrection and the certain hope that we will meet again one day in our eternal home.

This year, we said goodbye to a longtime partner in ministry, In the Hour of Need Family Shelter. IHN Family Shelter provided emergency housing to families in need and took careful steps in setting them up for success once they left the shelter for a new living situation. For many years, Immanuel provided overnight volunteers and financial support for IHN, coordinated by Mary Jane Rasku. We give thanks for IHN's many years serving the city of Worcester and for the hundreds of families who were sheltered and assisted over the years. We pray for the efforts of Friendly House who now runs the family shelter and serves this vulnerable population. I hope that there will be an opportunity for Immanuel to continue to support housing programs that offer sanctuary to those in need.

You know how sometimes things do not go according to plan, but they turn out pretty great anyway? This fall, we returned to Pride Worcester, hosting a booth with other Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Lutheran Congregations in our area. The first hour was a lovely blur of handing out free scarves, high fives, and hugs. But the weather was not on our side that day! Due to a tornado in the area, the festival was shut down, and many people ran into the public library for shelter. The sight of the library filled with people of all ages in outrageous rainbow attire waiting out the storm together with stories, music, and board games was a glimpse of God's heavenly kingdom.

For Kick-off Sunday, our theme was being "Formed by Love." When we announced our theme Martha McCarthy shared her practice of collecting heart rocks. Finding heart-shaped rocks has been her way of looking for God in the world and keeping her eyes open to God's presence. We shared this practice with Immanuel and invited everyone to keep an eye out for heart rocks this fall. Sonya and baby Kaelyn looked for rocks on their daily walks, many found heart shaped rocks at Calumet, kids found a bunch more during

the CROP walk...and hearts even appeared in boulders too large to bring to church and in English Muffins eaten for breakfast! This shared project was a simple way to observe the world around us and delight in it. Turns out God's presence is everywhere. Heart rocks, like God Moments, are easier to find when you're looking for them!

Can a paved parking lot be a God Moment? I'm going to say, yes! Before paving the parking lot, water would pool in several spots. In the winter, this made it nearly impossible to plow and treat for ice. We now have much better drainage, and it has been much easier to keep snow and ice away. On wintery days when weather can be unpredictable and change quickly, I feel better knowing that young and old alike will have an easier time getting safely from the building to their cars. This year we also had solar panels installed! We have reduced our electrical bill while doing our part to move towards sustainability and reduce our consumption of fossil fuels. Our biggest Capital Campaign projects are now complete! When Bruce Kiefer and Scott Hill gave their presentation in November, it was amazing to see all the progress that has happened so far! Our building is much better prepared for our next chapter of ministry!

Lastly, I see God in the kids at Immanuel! You never have to apologize to me for not listening to a sermon because instead you were playing peek-a-boo with Ameila Toomey or gazing lovingly at Charlotte Harrington! The youngest in our congregation are a precious gift and giving them your attention is an act of worshiping God who created them! I am also mesmerized by their curiosity and cuteness! To greater serve and support the families with young children in our midst, the council worked towards the goal of offering nursery care during our 9:00am service. We welcome children in our sanctuary *and* want to give parents the option of another space where kids can wiggle, roam, and play. Sam Bardon has been wonderful on staff leading this ministry, and she is joined by a team of volunteers Eileen Connolly, Karen Wiegand, Sue Hudson, Emmie Leotsakos, Chris Leotsakos, Annie Ferris, and Burton Barnes. With the growing number of kids in our congregation, we also added a Sunday School class this fall. Our readers moved up to Faith Quest led by Sandy Bardon, Sheri Parretti and Lisa Sternstrom, so Brenda Eisenlord and I could gear Godly Play for our toddlers and preschool learners. We began the confirmation year with three students and then gained two more along the way. Our Wednesday evening confirmation classes are a highlight of my week!

I'm looking forward to 2026, which will be a big year for me! In June, I'll celebrate ten years of marriage with Burton, and in September, I'll celebrate ten years of ordained ministry! With these upcoming milestones, I am filled with gratitude for the many ways that God has worked in my life and brought me to place where I am now.

What happens here, in our little corner of the world, in this community we nurture, through our shared ministry, reveals the many ways that God is at work and bringing God's Kingdom to earth. What will 2026 bring? I'm looking forward to embracing our identity as Reconciling in Christ congregation and doing more to celebrate God's welcome to all, adding a pollinator garden by the upper parking lot, and looking for additional opportunities to support housing programs and advocacy work in Worcester. In the year ahead, I am excited for all the big and little ways that God will continue working in us and through us at Immanuel.

May we see God in all our moments, each and every day!

Your co-worker in Christ,

Pastor Sarah

Annual Report – Pastor Josh Ferris

This is what we are about. We plant the seeds that one day will grow. We water seeds already planted, knowing that they hold future promise. We lay foundations that will need further development. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own. (an excerpt from the “Romero Prayer”)

Growing things requires patience and time. This is perhaps the biggest thing I’ve learned while raising children and serving as pastor. Even still, my impatient heart needs regular reminders that so much of the important work we do in life is a long-term investment of time, energy, and hope. Perhaps this is why the words above from the Romero Prayer resonate so much with me. They speak to the truth that often all we can do in life is plant seeds, water them with love, and then *trust* that God will act. Trust that seeds planted will, indeed, grow. Even if they take a while, and even if we don’t get to see it.

It may be cliché to say that we live in difficult times, but it is nonetheless true. So much is changing. There is much division and uncertainty, and we see the fruit being borne by anger, hatred, and lust for power. As we long for greater peace, and yearn for unity and justice to grow, we remember our mission: to plant the seeds of Christ’s love in this world. To plant seeds that help create the world that God longs for.

I have been blessed to serve as pastor at Immanuel for more than seven years, and over that time I have witnessed us plant many seeds. We have planted seeds with the hope of better ministering to young families, keeping them in the forefront in our minds as we plan and communicate. We have planted seeds with the hope of serving our neighbors, listening to their needs and growing our understanding of who our “neighbor” is. We have planted seeds to ensure that all receive their daily bread, to become more welcoming, to increase our care towards one another, to use technology for the sake of the Gospel, to increase joy and build a sense of community.

And – thanks be to God! – so many of these seeds have grown and blossomed and borne fruit this year!

Take our Meal Packaging Event. After years of working to share this opportunity with people beyond our walls, *this* was the year when multiple churches, organizations, and scout troops got involved, packaging more meals than ever. Or consider the *Garden of Feedin'*, where people from our church plant seeds to feed our hungry neighbors. When wildlife turned our garden into a buffet this year, members who were growing an extra row at home helped provide 680+ pounds of produce! Or look at the Holden CROP Hunger Walk, which this year raised more than \$21,000 – the most in its almost half-century existence – and is drawing in more churches and volunteers. So many seeds growing.

This past year, we welcomed *twenty-seven* new members into our congregation. I am thankful for each one, and for the gifts and faith they bring to our church. We baptized seven children and will baptize two more in January 2026. There have been more families visiting our church, more children in worship, and our annual Friendsgiving for families with young children grew to more than fifty people. These are things worth celebrating, but I also think it’s important to acknowledge that they are occurring after years of intentional work. We’ve been committed to creating worship services where young children feel welcome

and included. We've remained a church where the joy and energy of children is embraced. We've put time into ministries like Children's Word and Godly Play. Our Council has talked about how to plan with young families in mind, arranging to provide Nursery Care on Sunday mornings. Our staff has worked to increase connections between our church and nursery schools. So many seeds growing.

When I witness more people getting involved to visit and care for our homebound members and those living in assistive facilities, that's what I think of: *seeds growing*. It's what I think about when I see so much love and care extended to those experiencing loss and grief. It's what I picture when I hear English being taught to a refugee across the hallway from my office. It's what I rejoice in when a long-time member tells me that in recent years Immanuel has become more warm, more inviting, and more welcoming. It's what I marvel at when I hear about the formation of a ukulele group, and a growing handbell choir too big for the bells and space we have available, and new musicians offering their gifts in worship. It's what I saw when our congregation provided nearly \$10,000 to feed people when SNAP benefits expired. It's what I gave thanks for when we pursued the possibility of turning our third floor into transitional housing. Even though that project won't move forward because the hurdles and costs were too high, our church's willingness and openness to try something big and new and outside our comfort zone for the sake of our neighbors is a sign of the love and faith that dwells among us. So many seeds growing.

How blessed we are to see such things! How lucky we are to watch some of the seeds we have planted grow, flourish, and blossom! How fortunate we are to witness even just a small portion of our collective labor bears fruit! This is not something to take for granted. It is a rare and special thing. It is only possible because of the faith and hope and commitment of those Immanuel members and pastors who came before us, and because of God's grace and goodness. I pray that this gives *us* courage and hope as we work to plant seeds for the future and those who will come after us.

What are we planting and sowing now? What seeds will begin to grow in the time ahead? Right now, we are thinking about how to restart youth ministry at Immanuel. Our Council has been talking about how to better support empty-nesters. The creation of the Malmstrom Legacy Fund is creating new opportunities. Pastor Sarah and I have become more involved with clergy and advocacy groups in the Worcester area. In just two years, Immanuel will celebrate its centennial.

What kind of seeds are we planting for future? Not just at Immanuel, but in our world? People are desperate for the love of Christ, hungry for Good News, longing for something more than the cruelty and division we see around us. Our task remains: to plant the seeds of Christ's love in this world. To plant seeds that help create the world that *God* longs for.

It is, perhaps, our most faith-filled act to plant seeds full of love and hope and grace and peace and joy, trusting that what we do "may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest."

Let us not grow weary. Keep planting seeds, knowing they hold future promise, trusting they will grow.

your co-worker in Christ,

Pastor Josh

Annual Report – Parish Administrator

Biggest highlight(s) in 2025:

- It was good to work with Pastor Josh on making an improved “donation station” in Lawson Hall to better organizing our various ministry collections.
- The total gym revenue in 2025 was \$19,900! I believe that’s our highest annual gym revenue ever. A good portion of my time is spent on booking our gym, keeping each coach’s payment summary, collecting Certificates of Insurance, etc. Our biggest gym renters were X2 Volleyball, Holden Youth Soccer, and No Excuse Produce basketball, and we had many private party bookings as well. Thank you to Walter Shanahan for supervising the majority of them!
- A fair amount of my time is spent with contractors to be in compliance with town and state regulations. These include things like: our Board of Health inspections of our kitchen; elevation inspections by the state which are extremely time-sensitive; outdoor sign renewals; and building inspections, etc. with the Town of Holden. Greg Mills was always there to help with anything.
- Our Capital Campaign did produce some work for me such as mass mailings, answering questions, A/R coding of donations, etc. It was fun to watch these improvements unfold before my eyes (so well-orchestrated!). Bruce Kiefer was always there to help with anything.

Goals for 2026:

- Honestly my goals are just to keep up with our busy schedule of events, Sunday services, special services, and publications (weekly worship bulletin, monthly HERALD newsletter, funeral service bulletins, master Annual Report, and Lenten booklet, etc.)! Each week brings different tasks like daily phone inquiries, monthly donation collections, baptisms, computer software updating/back-ups, etc. I also do my best to visit with walk-ins if time allows. Thank you to those who volunteered in the office this year.

Trends:

- We saw a decrease in altar flowers orders in 2025. In the prior years we had two vases each Sunday, then down to one centerpiece (likely averaging 50% or less on centerpiece orders now).
- I am seeing fewer funeral receptions here in our gym. Many families are now holding gatherings at either restaurants or more privately in their homes.
- We are wonderfully stocked with grocery store gifts cards (thanks to your donations!) to give out to those in our community who ask for help.

I would like to thank: Elizabeth Siler, Duncan Gowdy, and Jen Greene for refreshing the ILC kitchen; and Erin Ellis and Elizabeth Siler for painting the women’s bathroom. A big thank you to Karen Wiegand & Dorothy Lindberg who quietly organize our Christmas Giving Tree (I wish I could capture and share the smiles on the faces of those who come and pick up the gifts—I have goose bumps just re-thinking of it!). Also, thanks to Jim Anderson for painting around ILC in various places all year, and to Ron Rosenlund for the *numerous* improvements he makes almost weekly. And to all my worship volunteers, we couldn’t have services like we do without you. Your number one appreciative fan is *ME!*

In Christ’s love,
Jen Langhill, Parish Administrator

Annual Report – Music Director

Happy New Year, everyone!! Now's the time to reflect on everything that has happened musically during 2025, and I am happy to say it has been another great year for our music program.

Last year, you may remember that we celebrated all the wonderful work that was done to update our organ. This year when I returned from vacation in August, Pastor Josh asked me if Immanuel would be interested in having a Steinway baby grand piano for our church services. How could I say no?! Thanks to Marshall Smith, arrangements were made to move this piano from First Congregational Church, West Boylston to our church. Thank you, Marshall, for making this treasured gift possible for our congregation and thank you also to the members of the FCC Church Council who offered us this wonderful instrument.

We had fun celebrating this instrument during the month of November! Many thanks to Sonya Imperio, Bruce Kiefer, and Osman Bilsel for showcasing this musical treasure. Thanks also to our piano technician, Michael Blanchard, for his outstanding work in making our piano ready for its debut in its new home.

There are no words to express my appreciation for all our musicians do for our congregation. We are blessed. Please show your appreciation to these people who are so willing to share their musical gifts with us. I am always afraid that I will omit someone when I list names, but I am still going to try.

First...our **Adult Choir**. These individuals attend a weekly choir rehearsal, participate in a weekly service, and work double on holidays. On behalf of the congregation, I thank each and every one of our members for their time, talent, and dedication. It is an honor to work with you. You are the best!

Bonnie Colon	Kurt Mangsen
Kathy Cranson	Molly McArthur
Jan Donadt	Greg Mills
Mary Donev	Kathy Mills
Stef Donev	Arlette Peterson
Anne Ekberg	Lori Rabeler
Molly Ellis	Bill Rasku
Dick Grayson	Valeda Schmucki
Jen Greene	Walter Shanahan
David Gustafson	Karen White
Kaylie Harrington	Maryann Wood
Sonya Imperio	Jill Zitzewitz
Heidi Lahey	<i>Should we add your name here, Reader??</i>
	<i>Remember, there is always room for more.</i>

This season, we were also blessed with our wonderful group of bell ringers. The **ILC Ringers** have grown not only in numbers, but in enthusiasm. What a treat to watch them work together! They are:

Osman Bilsel	Kaylie Harrington
Dawn Carbone	Sonya Imperio
Bonnie Colon	Heidi Lahey
Mary Donev	Kathy Mills
Anne Ekberg	Lisa Schaffter
David Gustafson	Jill Zitzewitz

I want to say a word of appreciation to all our **assisting musicians**. Many thanks to Ellie Bilsel, Osman Bilsel, Mary Donev, Charlotte Gridley, David Gustafson, Bryan Herlihy, Sonya Imperio, Bruce Kiefer, Jim Provencher, Lori Rabeler, Bill Rasku, Kaylie Harrington, Jon Sprague, Walter Shanahan, Maryann Wood and Pastor Sarah Barnes. These people not only make our music program special, but it is also a great deal of fun working with these gifted musicians.

We were also blessed this past year with the addition of two musical mascots: Charlotte Harrington and Kaelyn Imperio. Too cute for words!

We also saw the growth of our **ILC Strummers** group. What fun we have playing together! This year the group grew by combining guitarists with our ukulele players. This brought our songs/spirituals to a new level by adding harmony to our singing and improvisation to our strumming. Joan Lane, ukulele instructor at the Sterling Senior Center, continues to be our mentor and coach. She has encouraged us every step of the way and we continue to find new ways to include our group in various services throughout the program year. We hope that others will not hesitate to join us. I promise that you cannot play the ukulele without putting a smile on your face! Many thanks to:

Bonnie Colon	Joan Lane
Pastor Sarah Barnes	Arlette Peterson
Sonya Imperio	Joyce Roberts
Anne Ekberg	Jon Sprague
Pastor Josh Ferris	Mary Donev
Kurt Mangsen	Kristjana Imperio
Bill Smithburger	

I cannot close without a special word of thanks to **Jen Greene, Bruce Kiefer** and **Osman Bilsel**. These three people bring so many gifts to our congregation that it is hard to put our appreciation in one paragraph.

Bruce not only helps by substituting for me on the organ when I am on vacation, but this season he also shared his piano skills with us on our new Steinway piano. Thank you, Bruce, for your willingness to share your musical gifts.

Osman has helped us with accompaniments and evening prayer services throughout the year. I am so grateful that every time I ask Osman to play for a service or event, he never says 'no.' Thank you, Osman.

Jen Greene continues in her role as our Online Ministry Coordinator (aka Livestream Guru). What she does for our online services is truly amazing! The reason you are able to sing along with the hymns at home is because of Jen's masterwork producing the texts to all the hymns. Thank you, Jen, for all you do to make sure our online viewers have musical options at home.

In closing, I would like to wish you all a healthy and safe new year! Your support of our Music Ministry is greatly appreciated. It is a joy to share our musical gifts with you throughout the year.

And always remember...there is still room for more!

Blessings,
Claire Paquette, Music Director

Annual Report – Online Ministry Coordinator

I'm grateful for all those who continue to help make livestream operation happen every week, and so thanking them seems the appropriate way to start every new year:

Lori Rabeler	Sonya Imperio	Ray Donadt	Kaylie Harrington
Molly McArthur	Josh Greene	Jonathan Sprague	Elin Eisenlord
Penny Ferris	Ken Cranson	Elise Cranson	Eve Cranson
Elaine Vetter	Mark Vetter	Gabe Ellis	Carter Gowdy
Annie Ekberg			

I'm very appreciative for those who are new to livestreaming (double thanks to the youth volunteers and their parents!) and happy to have some fresh volunteers to work into the schedule.

2025 Goals

Completed (first time I've had more than a few – doing the happy dance!):

- Swap out Lawson Hall TV with one capable of looping media content
- Create custom prelude slides for seasonal events
- Create custom service layouts within OBS for “special” Sundays for ease of staging and repeatability
- Improve connectivity in gym for video/audio – new system installed Fall 2025
- Improve video/audio for services with additional mics and repositioned camera three – new mics installed Fall 2025

In Progress

- Embrace the Daft Punk mantra – “one more time” – and continue to adjust the existing setup so it's easier, more efficient
- Improve video/audio for services with hopefully improved lighting in 2026

2026 Goals

- Install small tv in childcare area so the service is played for caregivers
- Update Stream Deck to mirror seasonal service changes (50% complete)
- Purchase portable projector for better display quality and updated inputs compatible with more current laptops
- Purchase wireless Outdoor Portable Audio system for outdoor worship
- Purchase new handheld mic for gym
- Network cables run from men's bathroom to Lawson Hall / Gym / ILNS to extend network
- Anything church council / pastoral staff would like to see accomplished (at least within my limited skill set)

Non-livestream Goals

- Try to start organizing church non-sensitive data and migrate to NAS (network attached storage)
- Switch to Ripple Fiber for Internet with Static IP to start prepping for remote data access
- Re-IP phone system equipment

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Greene

Annual Report – Church Council

As sunlight continued to stream through the stained glass windows and cast its colorful light around the sanctuary, Immanuel's Council continued to do the work of our church. I would like to thank all those who shared their time and talents by serving on Council this past year, and especially for the steadfast, caring leadership of Pastor Sarah and Pastor Josh. Together, we accomplished the following:

- For monthly devotions, we read Rachel Held Evans' book Wholehearted Faith
- The Safe Church policy was updated to include SORI's
- We continued our presence at Holden Days
- We revisited our presence at Worcester Pride
- Sunday morning nursery care returned to Immanuel! With Samantha Bardon as caregiver and six volunteers assisting her, parents of young children now have the option of childcare on Sunday morning.
- Our ministries were highlighted with talks on Sunday mornings and signs around gathering areas
- We reached out to gather families with college students
- With joy, the Council approved \$5,500 for grocery store gift cards for food pantries
- Constitutional amendments were drafted, for the congregation's approval

May we reflect God's light!

Respectfully submitted,
Greta Gridley, Council President



Members of the church council at their picnic in June. Thanks to the Gridleys for hosting!

Annual Report – Church Council Malmstrom Legacy Fund Report

At its annual meeting in 2025, Immanuel established the Malmstrom Legacy Fund for the purpose of providing long-term funding for the ongoing ministry of this congregation. On September 30, 2025, the balance of this fund was \$540,501.48.

In accordance with the bylaws passed at the fund's creation, the Church Council voted to use 3.5% (\$18,900) of the fund's balance in the budget for the upcoming year. This is the *maximum* amount that must be used for this purpose each year.

In further accordance with those bylaws, the Immanuel's Council has voted to use 2.5% (\$13,500) of the fund's balance for ministry needs and projects in the upcoming year. This is the *minimum* amount that must be used for this purpose each year. This money will be spent at the Council's discretion and reported to the congregation at its Annual Meeting next year.



Our 2025 Calumet Getaway Weekend Group. This year's theme was "All Things New."

Annual Report – Education Ministries

If you're hoping to explore your faith or learn something new, Immanuel has learning opportunities for every age and stage of life! Read about these ministries below and in the reports that follow.

Godly Play

Godly Play is a story-based curriculum where young learners explore scripture through story and play. This class gathers at 10:30am each Sunday from late September to early June. In winter and spring of 2025, Brenda Eisenlord and I completed the Godly Play curriculum with the current group of students, so we created and led a series exploring prophets in the Bible. In the Fall, with the older kids moving up to Faith Quest, Brenda and I were able to start back at the beginning of the Godly Play curriculum with a whole new set of young students. Toddlers and preschoolers are welcome to come learn with us! With money from the Malmstrom Fund designated for Godly Play supplies, we have purchased baptism and communion materials for teaching the sacraments. We will continue to fill in missing or broken materials as we see the need using this designated funding.

Faith Quest

Our bigger kids needed a new curriculum! In the Fall, those who are comfortable reading were invited to join Faith Quest which gathers at 10:30am each Sunday from late September to early June. The Fall curriculum was a study in compassion. Reading stories of compassion in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, kids considered how they too could follow God's call to lead compassionate lives. Thank you to Lisa Sternstrom, Sandy Bardon, and Sheri Parretti for leading this great group of young people!

Confirmation

Confirmation is a time when those entering eighth grade (or above) take the next step in their faith formation and commitment to the church. Alex Sprague affirmed his baptismal promises in worship on October 26, after sharing his final Confirmation project on October 5. Thank you to Bill Rasku for serving as his mentor. Niko Figueiredo and James Dellecese returned to confirmation this year and are joined by Carter Gowdy, Eve Cranson, and Avery Drzik. Jim Anderson continues to be the very best co-teacher. Andy Sieracki, Karen White, Sue Swanberg, Lori Rabeler, and Pastor John Nieman are currently serving as confirmation mentors.

Monday Night Bible Study with Pizza

At the beginning of 2025, a new Bible Study was formed thanks to Stef Donev, David Cranson, and Jill Zitzewitz, who got the ball rolling! Hoping to create a learning opportunity for those who work on weekdays, this group started meeting on Monday nights WITH PIZZA. If you were running right from work, there was no need to worry about cooking or grabbing dinner. They started the year studying the Gospel of John utilizing *John for Everyone* by N.T. Wright to guide their discussions. This group continues to meet on the first and third Mondays of the month, and anyone is welcome to join at any time!

Thursday Morning Bible Study

One way God speaks to us and works in us is through studying scripture! In 2025, our Thursday morning Bible Study finished discussing the Gospel of John and then started into the book of Daniel. This is the first time the group has studied apocalyptic literature. It's been incredible to hear the insights, experiences, and wisdom of the people in our group! Led by Pastor Josh, we have about dozen people who participate, and there's always space for more!

Adult Confirmation

In the beginning of the year, Pastor Josh put out an invitation for anyone who might be interested in an adult confirmation program. Many came to Lutheranism later in life or (let's be honest) weren't paying much attention the first time through! Pastor Josh offered a three-week Adult Confirmation preview in the spring and was met with an enthusiastic response. What started as five interested people became a group of about thirty! Adult Confirmation is a one-year program meeting twice a month (alternating with Adult Forum on Sundays at 10:30am). You can attend any week you're available, even if you haven't been to previous discussions. So far the class has covered basics of Lutheran theology, and looked at Luther's Small Catechism, with the Ten Commandments, and Creeds. In the winter and spring, they will look at the History of the ELCA, learning more about our denomination and taking a look at ELCA social statements.

Book Club

In 2025, we read: *Silence* by Shusaku Endo, *What the Chicken Knows* by Sy Montgomery, *On the Side of the Poor: The Theology of Liberation* by Gustavo Gutierrez, *The Lighthouse Effect* by Steve Pemberton, *A Long Walk to Water* by Linda Sue Park, *Keep Moving* by Maggie Smith, *Pastrix* by Nadia Bolz-Weber, *The Measure* by Nikki Erlick, *Accidental Saints* by Nadia Bolz-Webber, and *To be Taught, if Fortunate* by Becky Chambers. This group of readers is open to anyone who wants to read and talk about what they've read. You can drop in any month the book looks interesting or use the book club selections to read more widely in genres you might read less often. We're usually pleasantly surprised by books that the group picks that we wouldn't have picked on our own! Those participating in Book Club pick the books together, so if you join, you'll help select the books we read! New people are always welcome.

Spirituality for the Home Stretch

Spirituality for the Home Stretch is an encouraging space where senior members of Immanuel can reflect and discuss their spiritual lives. In 2025, we read through *Falling Upward* by Richard Rohr. We've selected *Looking for God* by Nancy Ortberg to guide our conversations for 2026. If you have thought about joining this group before, this is the perfect time to jump in!

At Home Resources:

Bibles for Every Age

As part of Kick-Off Sunday, we gave out age-appropriate Bibles to every kid at Immanuel. We had board book Bibles for babies and toddlers, storybook Bibles for preschoolers and those still learning to read, and full text NRSV Spark study bibles for older children. Confirmation Students also received Lutheran Study Bibles as part of their first confirmation class.

GenOn Christian Parenting Project

This was a pilot program that Immanuel was invited to participate in back in spring of 2023. The first year of resources were sent out monthly from June 2024–May of 2025, with the second year of resources scheduled to come out in Advent. Unfortunately, the leadership in the pilot program changed and communication was more difficult. Overall, this program didn't end up being a great fit for Immanuel, but I'm happy we took part in trying out this new program.

Lent Devotional Resources

The Spiritual Reflections Lenten Booklet continues to be a meaningful Lenten tradition and valuable resource. Immanuel members contribute devotions, and the reflections are organized so that there is one guiding meditation for each day of Lent. Individuals share stories, life experiences, reflections on scripture, and prayer. Ken and Kathy Cranson along with Mary Donev edited and organized the 2025 booklet. These devotional booklets are mailed to family members across the country, given out to neighbors, and shared with friends. The devotion for each day is also posted on Immanuel's Facebook page.

Splash Mailing

All children under three years old receive a monthly newsletter called "Splash!" It corresponds to the child's age and offers parents simple, age-appropriate ways to incorporate faith into everyday life. Bedtime, bath, and family dinners all become occasions to talk about God's love and care for us or become a time to introduce a Bible story for the first time. Sending the newsletter each month reminds parents, "hey, we're thinking about you!" Whenever a child is born in our congregation, or a child under three is baptized at Immanuel, they are automatically added to the Splash Mailing list. It's never too early to start learning about God's unending love! We currently have ten children receiving this newsletter!

Submitted by Pastor Sarah Barnes



We give thanks for the confirmation of Alex Sprague. God Bless you!



Getting ready for the CROP Hunger Walk!

Annual Report – Children’s Word

Children’s Word is exists to give young children the opportunity to hear and interact with a lesson from one of the Sunday readings, as well as to meet and greet and be with each other. It occurs during the portion of the service that includes the Bible readings, the sermon, and the prayers. After listening to the Children’s Chat, they journey to room 2 along with 2 adult volunteer leaders.

We are still using the Augsburg *Spark Learning Lectionary*, but have also added materials and leader guides for grades 1-2 and grades 3-4. These are age and reading-level appropriate for the older children, which encourages them to participate. There are still the pre-K leaflets as well. This has required some adjusting by our teams of leaders because they need to be familiar with all three levels, but we agree that this system works best for all the children.

Our five teams rotate every week: Kathy Cranson and Jen Greene, Elise and Dave Cranson, Kristin and Frank Carnevale, Greta Gridley and Heidi Lahey, and Sue and Jeff Swanberg.

This past Christmas the older members of Children’s Word sang “The Friendly Beasts” during the 4:30 service. Singers included Josh Cranson, Penny Ferris, Kristjana Imperio, Emilia Greene, Madeline Barnes, and Raegan Eisenlord.

We all agree that interacting with our young church friends is fun for everyone, and it gives us the chance to learn and grow together. We return to the service in our sanctuary in time for the passing of the peace, communion, and announcements.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Cranson

Annual Report – Lectio Divina

Lectio Divina continued its weekly meeting on Mondays at 9:00am and continues to be used by two people at Immanuel: Jed Lindholm and Mary Donev. The group's goal this year was to share more with the congregation about the value of Lectio and increase curiosity on the connection between contemplative practice and ecospirituality. While our goal was not achieved, we are committed to being active resources for contemplative practices.

In 2026, we hope to increase communications on contemplative practices at Immanuel (we think most folks might not know about it, or indeed may even wonder what “lectio divina” means!) and to publish informational articles in public media on contemplative practices as a means for deeper spirituality and self-awareness.

If you'd like to grow in your own practice of contemplative prayer, we hope you'll join us online on a Monday morning. Our group is comprised of people from other congregations and groups and is a simple, welcoming way to engage both prayer and the Bible.

Respectfully submitted,
Jed Lindholm



*A new sign naming the Pastor Ron Jackson Memorial Chapel.
What a beautiful way to honor our beloved friend.*

Annual Report – Adult Forum

Adult Forum sessions for early 2025 were organized by Mark Vetter:

- * Pastor John Nieman began the year examining Patriotism and Christian Nationalism.
- * Linda Josephson led a study of the Minor Prophet Hosea.
- * Sonya Imperio presented an overview of Music Therapy and her work in it.
- * Jill Zitzewitz, Nancy Chanson, Bonnie Colon, and Greta Gridley led a Lenten series of devotions and videos from author and theologian Kate Bowler.
- * Molly McArthur and Cynthia Clothier described compositing and how it is done at Immanuel.
- * Osman Bilsel introduced guest speaker Alex Mooradian, founder of Worcester RISE, and his work with immigrants and refugees.
- * In support of our commitment as an RIC congregation, Elizabeth Siler and Jennifer Randall examined what it means to be transgender and reviewed recent proposed legislation.
- * Pastor Josh concluded the spring session with an Adult Confirmation preview that lasted three weeks.

After a summer break, Adult Forum resumed in the fall organized by Pastor Sarah:

- * We used *The Six Conversations* by Heather Holleman as a guide for having more connected and engaging conversations.
- * Karen White and Elaine MacNutt led a conversation on Prayer & Share, which was the highlighted Immanuel ministry for the month of November.
- * During Coffee Hour on November 16, Bruce Keifer and Scott Hill gave a Capital Campaign presentation detailing the projects that had been completed since the beginning of the Campaign.
- * The *Leaving your Legacy* series continued with a conversation about planned giving to Immanuel, and best ways to make that information available.
- * With our last Adult Forum of 2025, we looked at the new ELCA social statement *Civic Life and Faith: Seeking the Well-being of All* which was approved by the 2025 Churchwide Assembly.

We are always looking for Adult Forum leaders and engaging topics. If you'd like to lead an adult forum or just have an idea for a conversation, please reach out to Pastor Sarah anytime.

Submitted by,
Mark Vetter and Pastor Sarah

Annual Report – Prayer & Share

In 2025, our Prayer & Share Ministry again met each month for an hour of quiet sharing and prayer.

It is such a blessing to study scripture together. To learn and refresh our faith strengthens our witness to Jesus. Listening to one another is truly a gift.

Our group is always open to ALL people, and here are some of those who joined us in the past year: Beth Borchelt, Joy Cohen, Bonnie Colon, Nancy Chanson, Barbara Campbell, Jane English, Cheryl Bents-Hill, Jen Langhill, Carol Laino, Debbie Lingwood, Linda Josephson, Martha McCarthy, Elaine MacNutt, Sherilynne Parretti, Diana Provencher, Marilynn Vaillancourt, Marilyn Vars, Cindy White, Karen White, Jill Zitzewitz, and others. There is always a place for you to join us as we share, listen, and pray together.

In the past year, both Elaine and Karen have led the group, sharing different topics and themes like “breath prayer,” reflecting on Thomas Merton’s words that “in silence God ceases to be an object and becomes an experience,” and centering on Nehemiah 8:10 – “the joy of the Lord is our strength.”

All are invited as we gather this new year in hope.

In Jesus' Love,
Karen White



The choir rehearses. Notice all the smiles!

Annual Report – Women’s Circle

It is exciting to know that we are a part of the Lutheran legacy of love that has been operating for 80 years as Lutheran World Relief! In 2025, a total of 803,131 quilts and kits were sent to fifteen countries. This year the ministry was expanded to neighbors in crisis here at home: wildfires in California, flooding in Texas, and severe weather across the South and Midwest.

Here at home we assembled baby care kits and tied quilts. Thank you to Linda Morse who sewed diapers from large t-shirts and our quilters Linda Kiefer, Joyce Kujala, and Cynthia Cloutier.

We served a luncheon to the Men’s Ministry to thank them for their work in the community.

And as always, we celebrated the New Year with our potluck luncheon and Yankee Swap.

We are a group of fun-loving, caring women, and we would welcome others to join us.

Respectfully submitted,
Valeda Schmucki

Annual Report – Stephen Ministry

Immanuel’s *Stephen Ministry* has remained quietly active by supporting members in need of their care. If you haven’t heard very much about *Stephen Ministry*, that’s because our work of providing care and support to those in need (and those facing crisis) is confidential. We provide support and encouragement, using active listening and other skills to bring help and healing, one individual at a time. Those who have experienced a *Stephen Minister/Care receiver* relationship can attest to the blessing God has shared through this ministry at Immanuel for many years. We plan to continue for many more!

If you would like to be trained to serve as a *Stephen Minister*, let us know! It’s been a while since we have conducted a training, and we are always looking for more hearts to help care for God’s people.

As always, if you or someone you know has a struggle or situation that could benefit from meeting with a *Stephen Minister*, please reach out to one of our Pastors or a *Stephen Leader* to make arrangements.

In God’s Love,
Diana Provencher & Dorothy Lindberg
Stephen Ministry Leaders

Annual Report – Immanuel Lutheran Nursery School

Immanuel Lutheran Nursery School saw its share of ups and downs with staff during 2025, and we continue to look for more staff members. I am grateful to the Nursery School Board and to Pastor Josh for their guidance. And a big thank you to the ILNS staff for continuing to overcome being short-handed and providing excellent care to all children enrolled!

Here are some highlights from 2025:

- The school operated all year January to December 2025
- Enrollment has been high--there are waiting lists for all classrooms
- We have music with Mrs. Claire, Yoga with Ms. Jessica, and Chapel time with Pastor Sarah
- The school celebrated winter with a hibernation party, pajamas, and winter treats
- We celebrated Valentine's Day with a small party and passing out valentines to classmates
- We welcomed the Tumble Bus twice in February so all children could participate
- We welcomed Bill Shier in March to take school pictures
- The school celebrated Dr. Seuss Week at the beginning of March
- The Preschool class had a visit with Lahair and Gallagher to talk about dental health
- In May we hosted a picnic with mom for Mother's Day
- We celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week in May
- In June we enjoyed an indoor graduation ceremony for our Pre-k class
- We celebrated Father's Day with *Donuts with Dad*
- In June we had a fun foam party in place of our zoo field trip
- We enjoyed water play and outdoor time
- We were closed for vacation July 21-25, 2025
- While closed in July we had all the rugs cleaned and updates like painting were done
- We welcomed Kosmic Kelly for a science show in July
- We had fun at the traveling petting zoo in August
- We enjoyed the ice cream truck from Juniper Farms in August
- In August, we said goodbye and good luck to our Pre-k friends that headed off to kindergarten
- We had to raise tuition for the 2025/2026 school year
- We started our new school year in September 2025 with full classrooms
- The preschool and pre-k class enjoyed a trip to Tougas Farm in September
- We enjoyed an indoor Halloween parade with family and friends
- Kristine traveled to Ohio for an ELEA Director conference
- The school enjoyed a delicious Thanksgiving Feast
- We were so happy to have our Holiday party and have John McDonough and Pumpernickel puppets provide our entertainment
- We continue to provide the highest quality of care we can to families while keeping our school healthy, clean, and fun!

My hope for the immediate future is to give the highest quality care to all students and be able to hire staff members to fill our teaching vacancies. My hope for the long term is that we can have a full teaching team.

The current Nursery School Board members are Pastor Josh Ferris, Bonnie Colon, Megan McDavitt, Katie Galvin, Karen Wiegand, and Elise Cranson. I would like to thank them again all for their hard work and dedication to our school.

The current staff of the Nursery School is as follows:

Director: Kristine Whittemore

Assistant Director: vacant

Lead Teacher, Pre-k: Amanda Pelrah

Lead Teacher, Preschool: Megan Hayes

Preschool Teachers: Donna Smith and (vacant)

Lead Teacher, Toddler Room: Elizabeth Urban

Teachers, Toddler Room: Alainna Cation and (vacant)

Lead Teacher, Infant Room: Christine Williams

Teachers, Infant Room: Lindsay Catino and (vacant)

Floater: (vacant)

High School Teacher Aides: Gianni, Callie, Brianna, Aislinn and Ella

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristine Whittemore, Director of the Nursery School



Immanuel's new members welcomed in January 2025!

**Immanuel Lutheran Nursery School
Profit & Loss Budget Performance**

August 2025

	Sep '24 - Aug 25	YTD Budget	Annual Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Fund Raiser Income	794.58		
Registration Fee	2,795.00	2,530.00	2,530.00
Tuition	506,495.51	552,048.00	552,048.00
Total Income	510,085.09	554,578.00	554,578.00
Gross Profit	510,085.09	554,578.00	554,578.00
Expense			
Advertising	13,299.65	750.00	750.00
Bookkeeping	3,023.00	3,500.00	3,500.00
Church Donation	21,000.00	21,000.00	21,000.00
Dues and Subscriptions	1,471.58	3,250.00	3,250.00
Equipment & Maintenance	3,409.66	3,000.00	3,000.00
food	1,217.28	2,000.00	2,000.00
health insurance	9,232.38	7,000.00	7,000.00
licensing	0.00	350.00	350.00
Music with Claire	1,350.00	1,350.00	1,350.00
Office Expenses			
Credit Card Fees	1,707.27	2,500.00	2,500.00
Office Expenses - Other	2,470.41	1,500.00	1,500.00
Total Office Expenses	4,177.68	4,000.00	4,000.00
Payroll Expenses			
Bonuses	950.00		
Payroll Expenses - Other	475,139.43	458,323.00	458,323.00
Total Payroll Expenses	476,089.43	458,323.00	458,323.00
Payroll Tax Expenses	28,565.83	29,333.00	29,333.00
pictures	326.56	700.00	700.00
school supplies	8,250.31	9,000.00	9,000.00
special events	1,757.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
Staff Simple IRA Plan	3,766.71	6,000.00	6,000.00
Staff Support	5,196.52	3,000.00	3,000.00
training	3,058.95	2,500.00	2,500.00
transportation	400.00	900.00	900.00
Yoga	2,320.00	3,360.00	3,360.00
Total Expense	587,912.54	560,816.00	560,816.00
Net Ordinary Income	-77,827.45	-6,238.00	-6,238.00
Other Income/Expense			
Other Income			
Grant Income	40,050.00	0.00	0.00
Interest Income	4,691.45		
interest Mission Inv.	30.45		
interest/scholarship fund	2.46		
Total Other Income	44,774.36	0.00	0.00
Net Other Income	44,774.36	0.00	0.00
Net Income	-33,053.09	-6,238.00	-6,238.00

Immanuel Lutheran Nursery School
Balance Sheet
As of August 31, 2025

	Aug 31, 25
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
ILNS CD	109,067.88
ILNS checking	87,191.92
ILNS Mission Plus	8,354.20
ILNs Scholarship Fund	2.46
Total Checking/Savings	204,616.46
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	
	-3,714.51
Total Accounts Receivable	-3,714.51
Total Current Assets	200,901.95
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>200,901.95</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Deductions Owed	100.00
Fob Security Deposits	670.00
Payroll Liabilities	2,417.03
Total Other Current Liabilities	3,187.03
Total Current Liabilities	3,187.03
Total Liabilities	3,187.03
Equity	
Opening Bal Equity	41,975.16
Retained Earnings	188,792.85
Net Income	-33,053.09
Total Equity	197,714.92
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>200,901.95</u>

Annual Report – Christ Lutheran Nursery School

Christ Lutheran Nursery School is overseen by a Board which consists of Pastor Josh Ferris, Greta Gridley, Marie Vogel, Sonya Imperio, Shannen Calley, Heather Litchfield, and me, Amy Drzik. The Nursery School Board in turn reports to the Church Council of Immanuel Lutheran Church.

Christ Lutheran Nursery School has served the local communities for over fifty years! We are a traditional preschool wrapped in Christian values. We teach Early Childhood Education that prepares children for kindergarten while also providing a faith-based environment. This is shown in our day-to-day activities along with a monthly Chapel Time.

There are many people to thank for all their hard work to keep the school thriving and active. My thanks to the Board for their hard work through it all and the staff of the school for their relentless perseverance; Lindsay Melone (Lead Teacher), Amy Sarmiento, Cheryl Reinhart, Isabella Bissett, and Shannon O'Neill (Teacher Assistants). Also, a big thank you to our substitute teachers, Stephanie Benson and Annette Rotti. Thank you to our bookkeeper, Denise Nelson, and of course, a big thanks to Pastor Josh and Pastor Sarah for their never-ending prayers and support.

We are very thankful to have music time with our music teacher, Mrs. Claire, and have Chapel time with Pastor Sarah. We were also able to host Halloween and Christmas shows with all families able to attend. Our enrollment has been full, with our numbers now being twenty students per class per new licensing requirements of the state.

The building where we rent space is now owned by Carolynda Applebury, a member of the Crosswalk Church Congregation. We are currently still using our existing lease from Next Level and hope to have a new lease with the new owner soon.

Our hopes for the future are to continue operating and to grow together. God has blessed our little school over and over.

Despite all the challenges put in front of us we have continued to persevere and come out strong! I thank Ruth Ingui for everything she has taught me since I started working here seven years ago. I am grateful for her guidance in this role as director and I hope to continue to make her proud for years to come.

I am so grateful also for our amazing staff members. They have been so supportive of one another. I am also happy that we are still able to have some veteran teachers come to substitute teach and come in as special guest readers. Our little school is such a happy and positive place for children to grow and learn, and I am eternally grateful to be a part of it.

Respectfully submitted,
Amy Drzik, Director of the Christ Lutheran Nursery School

Christ Lutheran Nursery School Inc
Profit & Loss Budget Performance
August 2025

	Sep '24 - Aug 25	YTD Budget	Annual Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Cool School Tuition	0.00	0.00	0.00
Lunch Bunch	0.00	0.00	0.00
Registration Fees	2,375.00	1,900.00	1,900.00
Tuition	189,284.81	191,490.00	191,490.00
Total Income	191,659.81	193,390.00	193,390.00
Gross Profit	191,659.81	193,390.00	193,390.00
Expense			
Bookkeeping	2,886.00	2,300.00	2,300.00
Capital Purchases	278.41	1,000.00	1,000.00
Director's Discretionary Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00
ELEA	430.00	400.00	400.00
Equipment Purchases	503.48		
Food	1,611.11	2,000.00	2,000.00
Insurance			
General Liability	4,768.70	0.00	0.00
Work. Comp.	1,107.00		
Insurance - Other	0.00	5,035.00	5,035.00
Total Insurance	5,875.70	5,035.00	5,035.00
Licensing	125.00	300.00	300.00
Music	1,080.00	1,600.00	1,600.00
Office Expense			
Credit Card Fees	855.21		
Office Expense - Other	3,158.86	3,000.00	3,000.00
Total Office Expense	4,014.07	3,000.00	3,000.00
Payroll Expenses			
Director's Payroll	49,500.25	49,504.00	49,504.00
Substitute Payroll	260.00	1,800.00	1,800.00
Payroll Expenses - Other	93,728.00	85,016.00	85,016.00
Total Payroll Expenses	143,488.25	136,320.00	136,320.00
PR Taxes	10,927.89	11,246.00	11,246.00
Prof. Education	3,389.43	2,000.00	2,000.00
Rent	15,913.50	15,900.00	15,900.00
School Expenses	5,978.14	6,250.00	6,250.00
Special Events	1,246.07	900.00	900.00
Staff Benefits	0.00	0.00	0.00
Staff Bonuses	1,750.00	1,750.00	1,750.00
Telephone & Internet	1,997.10	2,400.00	2,400.00
Total Expense	201,494.15	192,401.00	192,401.00
Net Ordinary Income	-9,834.34	989.00	989.00
Other Income/Expense			
Other Income			
Grant Income	17,850.00	0.00	0.00
Total Other Income	17,850.00	0.00	0.00
Net Other Income	17,850.00	0.00	0.00
Net Income	8,015.66	989.00	989.00

Christ Lutheran Nursery School Inc
Balance Sheet
As of August 31, 2025

	Aug 31, 25
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Baystate Checking	122,726.28
Petty Cash	300.00
Total Checking/Savings	<u>123,026.28</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>123,026.28</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>123,026.28</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Advance Registration Fees	1,895.00
Advance Tuition	10,991.00
Payroll Liabilities	1,173.74
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>14,059.74</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>14,059.74</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>14,059.74</u>
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	386.41
Unrestricted Net Assets	100,564.47
Net Income	8,015.66
Total Equity	<u>108,966.54</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>123,026.28</u>

Annual Report – Mission/Outreach

CROP Walk, Equal Exchange, and Kit Assembly

Holden Crop Hunger Walk

On Sunday, October 19, we held our 48th Annual Holden CROP Hunger Walk. This ecumenical event brings together local churches to raise funds for Church World Service, supporting hunger relief, refugee assistance, disaster response, and self-help development programs in more than thirty countries worldwide. Twenty-five percent of the funds raised were donated to South Worcester Neighborhood Center, Loaves and Fishes, and Mustard Seed, helping to fight hunger right here in our community.

This year, eight congregations participated in the walk. Diana Provencher and Kathy Mills served as recruiters for Team Immanuel. In total, we had 74 walkers and 6 canine walkers, raising an impressive \$21,851.16. Team Immanuel alone had 32 walkers and raised \$12,673.32, accounting for 57% of the total funds raised!

Looking ahead, on Sunday, October 15, 2028, we will celebrate the 50th Holden CROP Hunger Walk. Our planning committee has set a goal of raising \$20,000 each year. If we reach that goal, our 50-year total will exceed \$500,000 raised to fight hunger! We thank our congregation for faithfully supporting this vital ministry through walking and sponsoring walkers.

Equal Exchange Market

Equal Exchange products are grown by small-scale farmers in poor, isolated regions of the world. In conventional trade, middlemen often force these farmers to accept low prices that do not cover their production costs, let alone basic living expenses. With Fair Trade, farmers get a fair price for their crops, and we can purchase the products for about the same price as conventionally traded varieties. This allows the farmers to provide a better standard of living for their families. In 2008 we started buying Equal Exchange products so that the members of Immanuel could purchase these products for their own use. We buy these items in bulk and sell them at cost, so this is not a money-making project. It is a way for us to support these farmers. Our product line has increased – besides coffee we also sell tea, nuts, and chocolate products. In 2025 we sold 143 items, with our sales totaling \$998. You can buy items during coffee hour any Sunday. If the market is not “officially” open, Kathy or Greg Mills will be happy to open the market for you.

We also sell small handmade items that we received from Church World Service. These items were made by women around the world as a means of income. The funds we receive from selling these items are donated to the Holden Crop Hunger Walk. This year we collected \$83.75. In addition, this year Bonnie Colon and I brought handmade items in Kenya to sell in the market. This year our sales of these items totaled \$128, which was donated to The Beverly School of Kenya.

Lutheran World Relief Kits

LWR Kits are designed to help people cope with poverty, disaster, conflict, and more. Whether a kit helps someone to maintain good hygiene, care for a newborn baby, keep education ongoing during a crisis, or learn a new vocation, they provide dignity and hope. You can see where our kits have been shipped to by checking out the map on the wall at the bottom of the stairs in Lawson Hall lobby.

School Kits: Every August, we collect items for the LWR school kits. In 2025 we assembled 85 kits. Thanks to Linda Kiefer, Linda Morse, Joyce Kujala, and Jean Bratt who sew the bags for these kits. Without their

help, we would not be able to do this ministry. If you sew and are interested in making school bags, contact Kathy Mills. If you do not sew, but can cut out fabric, please let us know.

Personal Care Kits: These kits contain towels, soap, toothbrushes, nail clippers, and combs. In 2025 we assembled a total of 55 personal care kits.

Additional LWR kits were made by the Women's Circle. In 2025 they made 9 quilts, 5 fabric kits, and 16 baby care kits.

Homeless Kits: We collected supplies to make homeless kits that our members can carry in their car and distribute to those in need as they travel. In 2025 we assembled 91 homeless kits.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Mills



Together with some of our packaged kits. Thanks for your hard work!

Annual Report – Little Free Library

A Little Free Library is a free book exchange where anyone can take a book and share it with others. These miniature libraries (small wooden boxes) built at the street curb encourage community members to share their favorite books, fostering a sense of generosity and connection. They serve as a testament to the joy of reading and the importance of accessible literature in communities.

A few years ago, Scott Hill was kind enough to build one for us that is a mini replica of our church! You'll find it at our street curb near the upper parking lot filled with books for all ages. Several times a month, it is replenished with "new" books that ILC members donate for people to take and read. At the moment, we could use more middle school aged books, as so many students walk by Immanuel going to and from Montview Middle School.

Book donations can be dropped off in the bin(s) at the donation center in Lawson Hall.

In prayer and reading,
Bonnie Colon

The Library

by Catherine Pulsifer

*The library is where knowledge can be found
A place of quiet, you'll hear not a sound.
Where treasures lie, within the books
On the shelves and in the nooks.*

*The library, a place for young and old,
Where books are lent and not sold.
Find wisdom or stories and lots of things
Pleasure a library truly does bring.*



Annual Report – Florence House

Ascentria Services for Children and Families (formerly Lutheran Social Services of New England) offers a wide range of programs and services for children, at-risk youth, and families. They create an innovative human-centered care model to help individuals and families in transition to move forward and thrive physically, intellectually, socially, spiritually and economically. These services include Florence House. The Florence House serves low-income, single, teenage mothers (ages 12-21) and their small children, who would otherwise be homeless or living in unsafe situations or substandard housing. The Florence House assists these young families by providing transitional housing in a safe, supportive, and therapeutic residential environment that fosters the development of life skills and healthy family relationships. Since opening in 1987 the Florence House has supported an average of 26 families per year.

Immanuel Lutheran Church supports this mission by providing \$50 each month, which is used to supply groceries to Florence House. They are called first to see what their needs are for the month. Groceries vary depending on the age of the children, such as baby food if there are babies. COVID also influenced what was needed, such as soup for mothers that were sick.

A team of members listed on the *Servant Connect* form are contacted first when we want to create treat bags for the residents at Florence House. This group includes: Cheryl Bents-Hill, Natalie Dellecese, Lauren Demerjian, Mary Donev, Emma George, Scott Hill, Susan Hudson, and Marilynn Vaillancourt. Items for ten gift bags for Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, and Halloween were collected! Residents also composed a wish list for themselves and their children, and these were added to the Giving Tree at Christmas.

The goal in 2026 is to continue to buy groceries that fit the needs of mothers and children of Florence House. We also hope to expand the gift bags to other times of the year. They know that Immanuel will be a constant supporter to create a measurable impact that strengthens and enriches our communities.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Friedman



Extending welcome at Worcester Pride!

Annual Report – Meal Packaging Event

On March 22, 2025, Immanuel hosted the 5th annual Meal Packaging event, our *biggest ever*, to help end hunger! Our gym was filled to capacity with over 120 volunteers!

This year we spent \$10,000 to purchase the supplies and ingredients:

- \$3,000 from donations, M&M tubes, and the November meal tasting;
- \$2,000 from the Immanuel Lutheran Church annual budget; and
- \$5,000 from a one-time donation from the Malmstrom Trust

On November 17, 2024, we tasted all 10 meals available from The Outreach Program, voted on our favorites, and chose this year's meals: Spanish Rice, Minestrone Soup, and Raisin Cinnamon Oatmeal.

On March 22, volunteers of all ages from Immanuel, First Congregational Church in Holden, Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Holden Youth Soccer, and neighbors unloaded trucks, set-up the gym, and spent two hours packaging 27,000 meals for local, national, and international charities. We purchased ingredients and meal supplies from The Outreach Program (www.outreachprogram.org) and Matthew Martin (www.endhungerne.org) delivered the ingredients and equipment Wednesday morning. He also taught us how to set up each of the eight assembly lines that filled our gym to capacity. A children's craft table was also set up so we could include encouraging notes and cards.

Volunteers added ingredients to each bag, weighed, sealed, and packed the completed meals in boxes for delivery. Once the meals were packaged, the equipment cleaned and packed, and the gym and kitchen cleaned, we gathered in the gym for pizza, snacks, drinks, and fellowship.

We donated these meals to:

- 41 cases (8,856 meals) were returned to The Outreach Program to be sent to Ukraine.
- 41 cases (8,856 meals) were returned to The Outreach Program to be sent to those impacted by January's devastating wildfires in Los Angeles.
- 17 cases (3,672 meals) went to the Wachusett Food Pantry (www.wachusettfoodpantry.org). They will be distributed to seniors and homebound residents in Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, and Sterling.
- 16 cases (3,456 meals) were picked up by the Loaves and Fishes food pantry in Worcester (www.uucworcester.org/social-action-overview/loaves-and-fishes).
- 16 cases (3,456 meals) were picked up and delivered by volunteers at Mustard Seed Food Pantry in Worcester (www.mustardseedcw.org).
- The remaining half-case (108 meals) will be kept at Immanuel to be distributed to local residents who request help along with grocery gift cards.

I have had the honor of coordinating this amazing mission for five years. This event has been a joy to oversee and the overwhelming donations, volunteers, and support are fantastic. Over these five years we moved from involving just our church to multiple churches, and then we added community groups and neighbors.

Next year's meal packaging fundraising and event will be co-led by Molly McArthur and Jill Zitzewitz. I am looking forward to the new ideas and energy this team will bring to us!

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Vetter

2025 Meal Packaging

“Our Biggest Ever!”



The gym was filled with 8 assembly lines!



Opening Prayer



Decorated cards were put on the cases of meals



Snacks and Fellowship after the hard work!



Finished cases to be donated

Annual Report – In the Hour of Need (IHN) Family Shelter

This is the final report for In the Hour of Need Family Shelter. This program was discontinued in June 2025, due to insufficient funds and its inability to be self-sustaining.

IHN operated on grants, contributions from congregations, organizations, individuals and fundraisers. The state decided **NOT** to continue a grant, causing IHN to lose \$50,000 annually. Further, congregational giving and volunteering had decreased over time, leading to an overall deficit of almost \$100,000. Friendly House, IHN's administrative agency, covered this deficit for 2025 but was unable to continue that contribution. As a result, IHN was forced to convert their home into a state-funded emergency shelter under Friendly House, which provides emergency and transitional housing to families and other support services.

Immanuel's final week of service was May 25-31, 2025.

Immanuel's dedicated core of evening and overnight volunteers and church members who consistently donated gift cards, supplies, and time to IHN are thanked for their faithful service. Thank you all for your prayers and support towards IHN.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Jane Rasku



Immanuel's new solar panels went live in October 2025!

Annual Report – Men’s Ministry

This was a bit of a slow year for Immanuel’s Men’s Ministry. Several of our usual jobs were canceled as families moved to other living arrangements. There were personal situations which slowed us down a bit, and we’ve also had fewer requests for help. Even so, several of the men will get together outside of the Saturday workdays to give support where needed.

You should always feel comfortable contacting the church office when you need assistance. Should you see what you think is a family in need please take a chance, let them know that you know where they may get some help, and that we would appreciate the opportunity to be God’s hands on earth. Spring and autumn tend to be our busy times, but we continue to meet all winter on the second Saturday of the month at 7:00am at the church, for coffee and fellowship and (as needed) a bit of work. Join us if you are able.

Respectfully submitted,
Ken Cranson



Some members of our Men’s Ministry. We are thankful for them!

Annual Report – John Street Soup Kitchen

The John Street Soup Kitchen is located in Worcester and provides meals to the homeless and other people who are in need every Saturday. Our congregation supports this ministry on the fourth Saturdays of odd-numbered months. This ministry continues to operate in a way where we deliver bagged lunches to members of John Street Baptist Church, and they give out the bagged lunches to those who need it. We have not received any news as to when the ministry will return to providing warm casserole dishes and other homemade goods for people to eat together around tables.

Kaylie Harrington organizes and collects goods to pack 150 bagged lunches and Ron Roseland delivers the meals to John Street Baptist Church. In 2025 we increased our congregational involvement! We even had a group of young families join us for packaging lunches. As for 2026, Kaylie is looking forward to continuing the organizing of each month's donations while Ron Roseland and Jen Greene run the day-of operations related to packaging and delivering the meals. If anyone is interested in becoming more involved, please reach out to Kaylie, Ron, or Jen.

Respectfully submitted,
Kaylie Harrington



A congregation that serves together.

Annual Report – Dismas Family Farm

Dismas Family Farm is a working farm in Oakland, Massachusetts, providing housing and services to twelve former prisoners, where they learn critical vocational skills to reintegrate meaningfully with society. Immanuel serves a meal to these individuals four times a year, on the fifth Thursday of that month. Normally, Immanuel members stay and share the meal with the men, but since the beginning of COVID, Dismas has asked that the meal simply be dropped off. We are always greeted enthusiastically by the human and canine residents.

This past year, Jed Lindholm and Deborah Sillo co-coordinated some creative and delicious meals, with the generous help of our congregation. Dinner was provided this year on March 27 and July 31. We also collected and delivered money at the end of October to treat the farm to Chinese take-out. Thanks Immanuel!

In Christ's service,
Deb Sillo & Jed Lindholm

Annual Report – Kids Express

Immanuel is part of a network of churches and other groups that provide meals for kids and teens at Concordia Lutheran Church in Worcester as part of their Friday evening Kids Express and Teen LOGOS ministry. Their numbers were a little lower in 2025, but it is still a very active ministry with dedicated members of Concordia who serve these kids every Friday, year in and year out.

Immanuel supports this ministry four times a year – twice in the fall and twice in the spring. We request donations from the congregation for a meal (like mac and cheese and ham, as well as salad, drinks, and desserts) and then prep and serve the meal in the basement kitchen at Concordia. Concordia has lost most of the churches who used to support Kids Express, so they are particularly appreciative of our help. And they always look forward to our mac and cheese!

After 9+ years of organizing this ministry, and with Verena in college and Evangeline off in the real world, the Welch family is looking for some fresh faces to take over or help out. If you are looking for a fun and fulfilling activity on a Friday evening, reach out to Brian to find out more. The next chances to serve are February 13 and April 10. Thank you for your ongoing support of this ministry.

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Welch

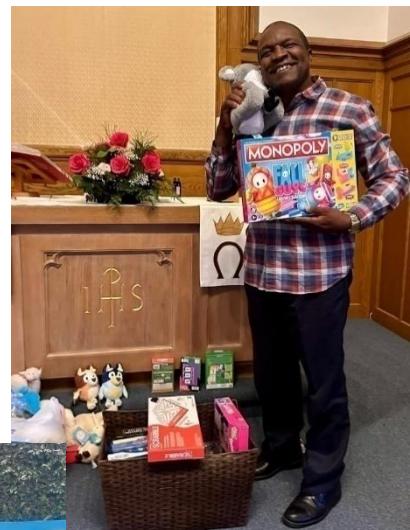
Annual Report - Beverly School Mission Team

Team - Sue Swanberg, Kathy Mills, Bonnie Colon, Gabe Ellis, Jen Greene

The Beverly School of Kenya continues its efforts to provide quality education and a nurturing environment for African children from grade school to high school, in no small part thanks to the continued support of Immanuel. As both political and economic challenges in Kenya persist, being able to support these students in a safe and rural environment has become critical to the children's health, well-being, and future. The generosity of Immanuel's congregation as a whole, and from individual members sponsoring kids with no financial means, has ensured so much positive development for years. The school has reported that many of their graduates are now attending universities, a major goal and success story!

This year land was donated in Kenya for the development of a Beverly School preschool/kindergarten, a service much needed. Stepping up with a toy drive, our congregation provided *many* toys, games, puzzles, blankets, etc. to outfit the new school (which is set to open this month for the beginning of the Kenyan school year). School founder Abdi Lidonde visited Immanuel to be presented with these gifts and was truly overwhelmed by our continued generosity and efforts. The new facility is ready to fill with little ones! In addition, an anonymous year-end donation has alleviated much of the school's immediate financial challenges and will ensure success this coming year! As Beverly School celebrates fifteen years of providing quality education under the most challenging of circumstances, we are thrilled to provide the opportunities needed for bright and productive futures! Without Immanuel's generous and loving support, none of this would have been possible. This year we plan for some of our members to again visit this remarkable school to love and encourage these children first-hand.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Swanberg



Annual Report – Garden of Feedin'

Co-chairs: Kristin Carnevale, Molly McArthur

Members: Nancy Chanson, Andrew Sieracki, Cynthia Cloutier, Jane English, Aidan Kupstas, Jennifer Greene, Alan Lambert, Jill Zitzewitz, Eileen Connolly, Cathy Hansgate, Lisa Sternstrom, Peter Swanson, Maryann Wood, Linda Morse, Richard Morse, Brian Welch, Duncan Gowdy, Kathy Cranson, Ken Cranson.

The purpose of this ministry is to grow and collect fresh produce to be distributed at Wachusett Food Pantry and Worcester County Food Bank. In 2025, we shared seeds with our fellow congregants and encouraged folks to “grow an extra row” at home. One highlight was planting squash, pumpkins, and cucumbers with the Godly Play learners! Throughout the growing season we planted and harvested vegetables in the garden beds at Immanuel and also collected produce grown by members.

We donated a total of 653.4 pounds of vegetables, fruit, and herbs to feed our neighbors! And we plan to do it all again in 2026! Hopefully, we will find a way to prevent deer from eating the vegetables we plant at Immanuel this year.

If you love gardening or want to spend some time outside with other members of our church, please reach out anytime to talk about helping in the Garden of Feedin’.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen Carnevale & Molly McArthur



This is what 86.5 pounds of produce looks like!

Annual Report – Care for Creation Team

In 2024, Immanuel voted to sign the *Care for Creation* covenant. In becoming a *Care for Creation* (CfC) congregation, we are guided by the statement:

"As a congregation committed to care for creation, we affirm God's creation in all its glory and beauty. We acknowledge God as the source of all things. We acknowledge Christ as the redeemer of all things. We acknowledge the Spirit as the sustainer of all things. As a result, we strive to respect all of life as sacred. We accept our vocation as Earth-keepers who care for creation. We accept our responsibility to live justly in relation to our fellow human beings in ways that all creatures may mutually thrive together."

In 2025, we began the year interviewing several members of Immanuel. We hoped to find the areas where our community was most interested and most concerned. We learned through many conversations that people of Immanuel enjoy spending time outdoors, in nature, and away from screens. We also learned many in our congregation were proud of the work we already do to feed those who are hungry through many feeding ministries. There was excitement around the solar panel project. We were asked to increase recycling bin visibility in the kitchen and wondered if we could decrease our use of disposable plates, cups, and cutlery in the kitchen.

After these interviews, we realized that the kitchen did not have water glasses. We have many teacups and coffee cups, but to serve water with a meal requires the use of disposable paper or plastic cups. We asked member of our congregation to donate water glasses for the kitchen and now we have a set to use for Senior Lunches or other mid-size events.

In May, Cynthia Cloutier and Molly MacArthur led a conversation on composting – sharing how it's done at Immanuel and how you can start composting at home.

In every *Herald* newsletter, we share an interesting fact and encourage the congregation to take some small step towards greater care of creation.

In the fall, we celebrated the installation of the new solar panels! These solar panels are a visual statement of our church's values in reducing our dependence on fossil fuels and our carbon footprint. A few people have even called the church to ask us more about the project and how to make this change at their church building! This project was the result of passionate people first dreaming about the possibility years ago as Immanuel's Green Team (prior to forming the Care for Creation ministry team).

In February of 2026, Jed Lindholm will lead an Adult Forum on *Climate Interactive*, a climate change simulator and in spring of 2026, we're looking forward to planting a pollinator garden near the upper parking lot. Keep an eye out for an invitation to help!

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Sarah and Jed Lindholm

Annual Report – Facilities Management Committee

The Facilities Management Committee is responsible for the physical plant and grounds of our church building and parsonage (where Pastor Josh and his family live). We determine routine maintenance needs and capital improvements, schedule events, engage outside contractors, and help set budgets to meet those needs. During the past year, the support of our congregation enabled us to continue required maintenance, complete repairs, and catch up on some significant deferred projects.

Please note that this report does not cover any projects related to the Centennial Capital Campaign, which has its own report following this one.

Early in 2024, we completed the process of having an Environmental Stewardship Assessment done by MA Interfaith Power & Light. They performed a thorough review of our properties and provided us with a detailed report outlining issues to be addressed and possible solutions. This report enabled us to prioritize the timing of capital projects in 2024 and 2025, and also provided resources to assure the most beneficial outcomes. The Church Council formed teams to implement Centennial Campaign projects, and the Facilities Management Team implemented a number of other non-campaign projects.

Some of the projects completed at the church in 2025:

Carpeting replacement in pastor offices, room 6 and hall
Women's Room – plumbing upgrades and new paint
Tree pruning and removals
Lawn mowing and maintenance
Upgraded irrigation system
Upgraded security lighting and exit sign replacement
Elevator component replacement, lift repairs, bi-annual state inspections
Audio/Video upgrades in sanctuary and gym
Gym Air Handler servicing and boiler piping insulation
Circulator pump replacement (2)
Oil tank replacement (2) in school-side boiler room
Coordinated with Centennial Campaign Project Teams for projects and to supervise contractors
Compiled utility usage statistics over the past year for both properties
Continued assessments and maintenance of heating, plumbing, and electrical systems, as well as windows and doors, roofing, and masonry
Met with contractors to collect bids for projects (including future projects)

We also completed inspections for fire, food service, building, electrical, plumbing, and safety.

Meetings with Senecal Electric and Boston Light to evaluate the lighting in our sanctuary are in-process. In the coming months we hope to have more information to share regarding these upgrades.

Some of the projects completed at the parsonage in 2025:

Front lawn maintenance and seeding for newly-established lawn
New landscaping planted in all front garden beds
Garage window replacement (2)
Gutter replacement with leaf guards
New exterior lights Installed
Bulkhead water sealing
First-floor bath fan/light Install
Rear fence replacement

Projects tentatively planned for the church in 2026:

MA Interfaith Power & Light Facility Environmental Stewardship Assessment review
Landscape review and redesign – coordinate with Centennial Capital Campaign Team
Men's Room Renovation – coordinate with Centennial Capital Campaign Team
Insulation review and installation
Possible gym water heater replacement
Continue lighting assessment and upgrades
Pollinator garden planted near upper parking lot
Other Capital Fund Projects to be determined for coming year/next year
Formulate long-range plan for Capital Improvements (roofs, kitchen range, electrical, etc.)

Projects tentatively planned for the church in 2026:

Kitchen floor installation
Tree-thinning as needed
Screen replacements in breezeway
Landscaping evaluation
Lawn pest control

Thank you to the *many* folks who have given their time and efforts to meet our needs during this past year. Many tasks are performed quietly and without fanfare. We truly appreciate your support. We also wish to express our appreciation to those families who have allowed us to use Memorial Funds to accomplish some vital projects this year.

I would like to thank the Facilities Management team members for all their help this year: Bob Watt, Dave Lindberg, Jim Anderson, Rod Schaffter, Ed Gingras, Craig Landquist, Chris Senecal, Kevin Duguay, Bruce Kiefer, Scott Hill, Ron Rosenlund, Alan Lambert, Pastor Josh, and Pastor Sarah. Special thanks to Jen Greene for all her expertise in upgrading our sound, video, and internet systems, to Elizabeth Siler and Erin and Todd Ellis for the work in the Women's Room, and to Elizabeth, Duncan Gowdy and Jen for reorganizing the kitchen. Finally, thanks also to Jen Langhill, Don, Kristine, and Claire for all they do to keep us informed on facility issues.

New team members are always welcome - let us know if you are interested!

Our Hands, God's Work
For the Facilities Team,
Gregory Mills / Bruce Kiefer

Annual Report – Centennial Capital Campaign

This year Immanuel continued with planned projects in celebration of our upcoming 100-year anniversary. The theme of our Centennial Capital Campaign is “Honoring the Past and Embracing the Future.”

Projects Completed in 2025:

Parsonage Painting and Gutters - \$19,690. After needed repair of damaged woodwork, Cranford Painting applied two coats of a new color to the clapboards and matched the trim to the window frame color. New gutters with leaf guards were then installed, eliminating need for fall cleanout and helping with water issues in the basement.

Parsonage Kitchen Wall - \$27,955. The original project scope was to refurbish the breezeway between the house and garage. However, after further study, the Steering Committee determined that a better use of our resources would be to modify the kitchen layout, increasing functionality and value to the parsonage. The wall between the kitchen and dining room was removed and a peninsula with cabinets was added.

Solar Panels - \$67,827 (after tax credits). ReVision Energy installed two arrays of solar panels on the gym roof, along with the necessary electrical controls, which were integrated with our electrical panels and interconnected with the Holden grid. The system went live on October 3 and has been producing whenever the sun shines. Through the end of 2025, the system produced approximately 4,100 kWh. For 2025, our average monthly usage was approximately 3,400 kWh.

Parking Lot - \$79,365. In July, Minutemen Paving removed the old asphalt, added gravel and regraded to solve the drainage problems on the west end of the lower lot. New pavement and berms were installed, along with walkways. New lines with required handicapped spaces and new signposts finished off the work. Two underground conduits were installed to allow for possible future EV charging or other future use.



Projects Planned for 2026:

Replace and Update Church Landscaping - \$15,000 (budget estimate). Many of the shrubs in front of the sanctuary and Lawson Hall are overgrown and need replacing. A team will be organized to consider various options for new plantings and arrangements over the next few months so that work can begin in the spring.

Men's Room Renovation - \$25,000 (budget estimate). In addition to replacing the antiquated fixtures, the lavatory will be rearranged. The current janitorial closet will be relocated, so that a larger space can be created to house vital (and sensitive) electrical, phone, and network equipment. We are still in the brainstorming phase for this work.

Centennial Campaign Summary:

Projects completed in 2025	\$	Totals
Parsonage Painting & gutters	19,690	
Parsonage Kitchen Wall	27,955	
Solar Panels (after tax credits)	67,827	
Parking Lot	79,365	
Total 2025		\$194,837
Projects completed in 2024		
Stained Glass Windows	43,710	
Sanctuary HVAC	39,525	
Parsonage HVAC	28,450	
Parsonage Windows	13,345	
Parsonage Chimney	4,925	
Gym Oil Tank	4,000	
Total 2024		\$133,955
Total spent on projects		\$328,792
Other (consultant fee, prep, misc.)		
Total spent	16,969	
		\$345,761
2026 projects Estimates	\$40,000	
Total anticipated expenses		\$385,761
Receipts	\$466,883	
Anticipated yet from Pledges	\$91,117	
Total anticipated receipts		\$558,000
Balance for future projects		\$172,239

On behalf of the Centennial Campaign Committee, we express our deep thanks for the great response at the beginning of the campaign, which has enabled us to get so many projects done already. For those who have pledged, please remember to continue with your offerings and support so that we can continue and complete the next set of projects!

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Sternstrom and Linn Watt, Centennial Capital Campaign Steering Committee Co-Chairs

Scott Hill and Bruce Kiefer, Centennial Capital Campaign Project Team Co-Chairs

Annual Report – Stewardship

It is in the nature of love to *give*. This truth was the motivation for our 2025 stewardship theme *Giving Love*. Perhaps the most famous verse from the Bible tells us that “God so loved the world that he *gave...*” (John 3:16) These familiar words teach us that love *gives*. God has given so many things to us – our time, our bodies, our possessions, our relationships, our skills, and our financial resources. God has given us the gifts of salvation and forgiveness and eternal life.

Filled with God’s love, how will we give?

Immanuel is an incredibly generous congregation, and I am continually thankful for the way people give. This huge annual report, full of so many stories of mission and ministry, is a testament to that generosity. It’s a testament to a church where people use their gifts and skills and faith together. In the coming year, I hope we are each attentive to new ways God is calling us to serve.

As part of talking about stewardship in the fall, we asked people to submit ‘Estimate of Giving’ cards that share how they plan to financially support the church in the year ahead. My hope every year is that we can talk about money without using guilt, and also without sounding self-serving. Giving a portion of our resources back to God’s work in and through Immanuel really is an expression of *faith*. It’s about a lot more than just keeping the lights on and paying the pastors (though we’re thankful for that too).

We do this work of collecting ‘Estimate of Giving’ cards each year. It’s tedious and following up with people can sometimes be uncomfortable or awkward. Please know we are incredible thankful when people respond. Even if that response is that they won’t be able to give financially in the year ahead. Remember: no shame. We know everyone’s situation is different and that life has a way of changing.

At this annual meeting, for the first time in years, we will vote to pass a budget that has a significant deficit. There are a few things I’d like for you to know about that.

First, Immanuel is now the last ELCA congregation in the New England Synod that has two full-time pastors. While this is something to feel good about, it’s only possible because both pastors have spouses whose employers provide medical insurance coverage.

Second, we are not immune from the shifting demographics and changes that have impacted so many other churches. We know that Immanuel has thrived because those who came before us have been incredibly generous. If we want to continue to thrive – and if we want Immanuel to continue to have two full-time pastors – new families and households and generations will have to pick up the mantle of generosity.

May we give of ourselves, and in giving share the love of God and proclaim the Good News of the Gospel.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Josh Ferris

Immanuel Lutheran Church Comparative Balance Sheet

December 31, 2025 and December 31, 2024

	2025	2024
Operating Fund		
Assets		
Operating cash accounts	\$ 95,641.15	\$ 126,835.56
Certificates of deposit	111,836.86	72,287.68
Petty cash	150.00	150.00
Prepaid expenses	7,983.00	7,255.00
Due from Centennial Fund	18,182.68	70,779.09
Mission Investment Account	<u>19,799.79</u>	<u>19,681.77</u>
	<u><u>\$253,593.48</u></u>	<u><u>\$296,989.10</u></u>
Liabilities		
Dedicated accounts	\$ 60,209.23	\$ 76,960.10
Prepaid revenue	22,200.00	51,300.00
Payroll taxes	<u>813.00</u>	-
	<u><u>83,222.23</u></u>	<u><u>128,260.10</u></u>
Fund equity		
Beginning of the year	168,729.00	136,235.80
Annual surplus (deficit)	<u>1,642.25</u>	<u>32,493.20</u>
	<u><u>170,371.25</u></u>	<u><u>168,729.00</u></u>
	<u><u>\$253,593.48</u></u>	<u><u>\$296,989.10</u></u>
Centennial Fund		
Assets		
Money market account	\$ 98,649.20	\$ 215,752.77
Certificates of deposit	<u>18,606.23</u>	<u>17,847.71</u>
	<u><u>\$117,255.43</u></u>	<u><u>\$233,600.48</u></u>
Liabilities		
Due to Operating Fund	<u>\$18,182.68</u>	<u>\$70,779.09</u>
Fund equity		
Beginning of the year	162,821.39	72,973.91
Annual surplus (deficit)	<u>(63,748.64)</u>	<u>89,847.48</u>
	<u><u>99,072.75</u></u>	<u><u>162,821.39</u></u>
	<u><u>\$117,255.43</u></u>	<u><u>\$233,600.48</u></u>
Other Funds		
Mission Endowment Fund	\$271,622.37	\$203,538.53
Malmstrom Legacy Fund	549,599.02	522,050.12
Emergency Reserve Fund	9,484.44	9,427.91
Scholarship Fund	<u>1,974.01</u>	<u>1,962.23</u>

Immanuel Lutheran Church Summary of Cash Balances

December, 2025

	Operating Fund	Dedicated Accounts	Total
December 1, 2025			
Operating Balances	<u>\$171,817.71</u>	<u>\$61,870.14</u>	<u>\$233,687.85</u>
December 31, 2025			
Checking Account	1 \$145,551.92	\$ -	\$145,551.92
Dedicated Investment Account	1 -	81,875.88	81,875.88
Allocate Dedicated Funds	<u>21,666.65</u>	<u>(21,666.65)</u>	<u>-</u>
Balance	167,218.57	60,209.23	227,427.80
Reserved for:			
Prepaid insurance	7,983.00	-	7,983.00
Due from Centennial Fund	18,182.68	-	18,182.68
Payroll Taxes	2 (813.00)	-	(813.00)
Deferred Member Revenue	3 (22,200.00)	-	(22,200.00)
Operating Balances	<u>\$170,371.25</u>	<u>\$60,209.23</u>	<u>\$230,580.48</u>
Income (Loss) for Month	<u>\$(1,446.46)</u>	<u>\$(1,660.91)</u>	<u>\$(3,107.37)</u>

Other Cash Balances	Beg. Of Month	Activity	End of Month
Mission Endowment Fund	\$270,700.99	\$921.38	\$271,622.37
Malmstrom Trust	548,476.73	1,122.29	549,599.02
CWB Nursery School CD	146,731.77	-	146,731.77
Emergency Reserve Fund	9,479.78	4.66	9,484.44
Scholarship Fund	1,973.04	0.97	1,974.01
Centennial Funds	89,903.31	9,169.44	99,072.75

1 Includes CD's totaling \$111,837

2 Represents liability for payroll taxes and bills, paid by the 15th of the next month.

3 2026 contributions received in advance

Budget Versus Actual Notes for the Month

Offerings were over budget by \$5,477 for the month and under by \$(207) for the year.

Gym Use was over budget by \$3,915 for the year.

Interest was over budget by \$1,901 due to use of CD's during the year.

Total expenses were over budget by \$(2,872) for the month and over by \$(4,623) for the year due to:

 Admin was under by \$2,113 due to timing of payroll items.

 Property was over under by \$9,782) due to maintenance, oil, insurance and electricity.

The YTD income was \$1,642, over budget by \$1,562.

The general fund balance is \$170,371 at 12/31/2025.

Immanuel Lutheran Church Dedicated Funds Report

December, 2025

Account	Major 00 - Ungrouped	Beginning	December		Year-to-Date		Ending Balance
		Balance	In	Out	In	Out	
017-00-00-01	KITCHEN FUND	(200.84)	-	(65.75)	-	(65.75)	(266.59)
017-00-00-03	WORLD HUNGER APPEAL	300.00	-	-	-	-	300.00
017-00-00-04	HUNGER OUTREACH	995.00	560.00	(500.00)	2,330.00	(1,750.00)	1,575.00
017-00-00-05	SOUP KITCHEN	1,007.13	-	-	70.00	(70.00)	1,007.13
017-00-00-06	SNOWFLAKE BAZAAR	-	-	-	-	-	-
017-00-00-07	CAPITAL FUND MATCHING	-	-	-	-	-	-
017-00-00-08	Parsonage Capital Fund	3,760.85	208.33	(1,209.55)	4,274.98	(6,283.33)	1,752.50
017-00-00-09	Church Capital Fund	5,123.31	1,166.67	(146.16)	14,000.02	(24,781.00)	(5,657.67)
017-00-00-10	MEMORIAL FUND	7,996.18	330.00	(2,916.40)	1,105.00	(2,916.40)	6,184.78
017-00-00-12	Interfaith Hosp. Network	25.00	-	-	-	-	25.00
017-00-00-13	FLOWERS	57.00	670.00	(819.00)	2,076.00	(2,184.00)	(51.00)
017-00-00-14	THE LUTHERAN	-	-	-	1,000.00	-	1,000.00
017-00-00-15	GYM SUPERVISORS	2,935.23	1,683.00	(1,215.00)	11,820.50	(14,715.00)	40.73
017-00-00-16	YOUTH	43.15	-	-	-	-	8,443.15
017-00-00-17	WONDER LEAGUE	1,357.41	200.00	(30.00)	4,400.00	(5,147.74)	609.67
017-00-00-18	Get Away Weekend	1,968.98	-	-	679.32	(1,701.75)	946.55
017-00-00-20	COFFEE	626.07	40.00	(586.96)	589.00	(616.84)	598.23
017-00-00-21	COPIER DONATIONS	71.25	-	-	-	-	71.25
017-00-00-23	2ND MILE-CAMPERSHIPS	-	-	-	10,364.37	-	10,364.37
017-00-00-24	Fellowship Events	20.00	-	-	100.00	(100.39)	19.61
017-00-00-25	Men's Ministry	3,249.97	-	-	150.00	(456.01)	2,943.96
017-00-00-26	Karen Grove Relief Fund	2,548.10	-	-	75.00	-	2,623.10
017-00-00-27	Organ Repair Fund	-	-	-	3,634.50	(3,634.50)	-
017-00-00-28	Equal Exchange Products	227.54	347.25	(126.20)	697.50	(715.80)	209.24
017-00-00-30	Funeral Services	1,477.76	-	-	-	-	1,477.76
017-00-00-31	Youth Music Fund	173.21	-	-	275.00	(100.00)	348.21
017-00-00-32	Calumet Support	-	-	-	-	-	-
017-00-00-33	OTHER (TRANSITORY)	34,422.80	55,129.86	(54,381.00)	347,265.04	(356,418.59)	25,269.25
017-00-00-34	KEY DEPOSITS	375.00	-	-	-	-	375.00
Totals		76,960.10	60,335.11	(61,996.02)	404,906.23	(421,657.10)	60,209.23

Immanuel Lutheran Church Treasurer's Report
December, 2025

IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Treasurer's Report
December, 2025

	CURRENT MONTH			YEAR TO DATE			
	Budget	Actual	%	Prior Year	Budget	Actual	%
INCOME							
Current Year Envelopes	\$ 30,906	\$ 35,014	113.3%	\$ 37,127	\$ 397,500	\$ 395,579	99.5%
Malmstrom Trust	-	-	-	-	16,000	16,000	100.0%
Loose Offerings	291	1,630	560.1%	214	3,500	5,214	149.0%
Church School	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Special	1,600	1,905	119.1%	2,219	3,600	4,176	116.0%
Nursery School	1,750	1,750	100.0%	1,750	21,000	21,000	100.0%
Gym Use	1,520	1,840	121.1%	1,700	16,000	19,915	124.5%
Interest	250	376	150.4%	312	3,000	4,901	163.4%
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Income	<u>36,317</u>	<u>42,515</u>	<u>117.1%</u>	<u>43,322</u>	<u>460,600</u>	<u>466,785</u>	<u>101.3%</u>
EXPENSES							
Outreach-Benevolence	4,879	3,629	74.4%	4,590	46,050	43,833	95.2%
Administration	24,044	24,691	102.7%	22,795	311,970	309,857	99.3%
Christian Education	90	885	983.3%	252	1,900	3,484	183.4%
Worship & Music	2,086	481	23.1%	937	7,750	5,605	72.3%
Congregational Council	75	-	-	-	500	578	115.6%
Ministries	200	487	243.5%	180	4,150	3,903	94.0%
Stewardship	-	501	-	-	600	501	83.5%
Property	8,340	11,912	142.8%	7,748	71,100	80,882	113.8%
Capital Fund	1,375	1,375	100.0%	1,666	16,500	16,500	100.0%
Total Expenses	<u>41,089</u>	<u>43,961</u>	<u>107.0%</u>	<u>38,168</u>	<u>460,520</u>	<u>465,143</u>	<u>101.0%</u>
Excess (Deficiency)	<u>\$ (4,772)</u>	<u>(1,446)</u>	<u>5,154</u>	<u>\$ 80</u>	<u>1,642</u>	<u>\$ 32,743</u>	
General Fund, Beginning		<u>171,817</u>			<u>168,729</u>		
		<u>\$ 170,371</u>			<u>\$ 170,371</u>		

Immanuel Lutheran Centennial Fund Activity
 Inception through December 31, 2025

	2025	2024	2023	Total
Activity				
Receipts				
Contributions	\$110,697.84	\$256,967.69	\$30,271.00	\$397,936.53
ERTC Funds	15,452.45	-	53,494.10	68,946.55
Interest income	<u>3,482.15</u>	<u>3,428.90</u>	<u>108.81</u>	<u>7,019.86</u>
	<u><u>129,632.44</u></u>	<u><u>260,396.59</u></u>	<u><u>83,873.91</u></u>	<u><u>473,902.94</u></u>
Expenditures				
Campaign consultant	-	8,800.00	4,400.00	13,200.00
Campaign expenses	64.99	3,704.13	-	3,769.12
Projects				
Solar panels	66,306.09	28,090.13	2,500.00	96,896.22
Stained glass windows	-	43,710.00	-	43,710.00
Church/Parsonage HVAC	-	67,974.55	4,000.00	71,974.55
Parking lot	79,364.94	-	-	79,364.94
Parsonage kitchen	27,955.06	-	-	27,955.06
Parsonage windows/guttr	4,940.00	13,345.30	-	18,285.30
Parsonage painting	14,750.00	-	-	14,750.00
Parsonage masonry	<u>-</u>	<u>4,925.00</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>4,925.00</u>
	<u><u>193,381.08</u></u>	<u><u>170,549.11</u></u>	<u><u>10,900.00</u></u>	<u><u>374,830.19</u></u>
Net activity	(63,748.64)	89,847.48	72,973.91	99,072.75
Fund balance, Beginning of period	<u>162,821.39</u>	<u>72,973.91</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Fund balance, End of period	<u><u>\$99,072.75</u></u>	<u><u>\$162,821.39</u></u>	<u><u>\$72,973.91</u></u>	<u><u>\$99,072.75</u></u>
Savings account				98,649.20
Cert. of Deposit - Tithed Portion				18,606.23
Due to General Fund				<u>(18,182.68)</u>
Balance				<u><u>99,072.75</u></u>

Immanuel Lutheran Capital Fund Activity

Year ended December 31, 2025

	Church Capital Fund 17 - 09	Parsonage Capital Fund 17-08	Total Capital Funds
Balance, January 1, 2025	<u>\$5,123.31</u>	<u>\$3,760.85</u>	<u>\$8,884.16</u>
Additions			
Budgeted General Fund transfers	14,000.02	2,499.98	16,500.00
Additions	-	1,150.00	1,150.00
Total additions	<u>14,000.02</u>	<u>3,649.98</u>	<u>17,650.00</u>
Expenditures			
Carpet	8,181.70	-	8,181.70
Oil tanks	10,066.52	-	10,066.52
Riding mower	2,599.95	-	2,599.95
Restrooms, kitchen, and other	3,932.83	-	3,932.83
Parsonage site work	-	2,526.98	2,526.98
Kitchen/bath	-	1,638.43	1,638.43
Garage windows	-	1,492.92	1,492.92
Total expenditures	<u>24,781.00</u>	<u>5,658.33</u>	<u>30,439.33</u>
Balance, December 31, 2025	<u>\$(5,657.67)</u>	<u>\$1,752.50</u>	<u>\$(3,905.17)</u>

Immanuel Lutheran Church Investment Fund Activity

January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025

	Active Memorial Fund	Mission Endowment Fund	Malmstrom Legacy Fund
Balance, January 1, 2025	\$7,996.18	\$203,538.53	\$522,050.12
Gift Income	1,105.00	49,183.88	20,742.07
Market Appreciation	-	29,099.96	77,483.10
Operating appropriation	-	-	(16,000.00)
Expenditures (see below)	<u>(2,916.40)</u>	<u>(10,200.00)</u>	<u>(54,676.27)</u>
Balance, December 31, 2025	<u>\$6,184.78</u>	<u>\$271,622.37</u>	<u>\$549,599.02</u>

Detail of Activity

Income to Active Memorial Fund	Expenditures - Active Memorial Fund	Expenditures - Other Funds
Gifts in memory of:		
E. Clarke	AV upgrades	<u>Mission Endowment</u>
G. Gaskin	Laptop replacement	Livestrong YMCA
M. Gustafson		\$1,450.00
		Why Me Sherri's
		1,450.00
		Hole in the Wall
		1,450.00
		Re-Member
		1,700.00
		Nurse- Family
		1,700.00
		Global Refuge
		1,000.00
		Mercy Ships
	<u>\$ 2,916.40</u>	<u>1,450.00</u>
		Total withdrawn
		<u>\$10,200.00</u>

Proposed Changes to Immanuel's Constitution

We are required to make more than a dozen specific changes to our parish constitution to put it in sync with the ELCA's current model parish constitution. Fifteen of those changes are mandatory. We still must formally vote on all changes (even the mandatory ones) to show that our congregation accepts them.

There are several reasons for these changes, ranging from clarity and consistency of grammar and formatting, to keeping the lawyers happy.

NOTE: a complete list of changes and the reasons for them is available – [click here](#).

There is one element in one mandatory change, however, that we want to call attention to before we vote, as it requires a decision.

There is a procedure to call an emergency congregational meeting. It is article **C10.02**. We need to determine the number of signatures that are required on a letter requesting an emergency parish meeting.

As spelled out in article **C10.04**, a quorum for any congregational meeting is 10% of the voting membership.

Since a quorum is required for an emergency meeting to be held, the council recommends we vote to approve that a full quorum, 10% of the voting membership, must sign a letter requesting it. We recommend using a percentage rather than a specific number of people. This way, no matter what size our church is, as long as 10% of the voting membership signs the letter, an emergency meeting can be requested.

The council moves that we approve all suggested and mandatory suggested changes to our constitution to bring it into conformity with the newest Model Constitution for Congregations of the ELCA, and that article C10.02 requires the written request of 10% of voting members for a special Congregational Meeting to be called.

From 16.04 in our Constitution:

This constitution may be amended to bring any section into conformity with a section or sections, either required or not required, of the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* as most recently amended by the Churchwide Assembly. Such amendments may be approved by a majority vote of those voting members present and voting at any legally called meeting of this congregation.

2026 Proposed Mission Endowment Fund Distribution

The Mission Endowment Fund shall be an endowed fund from which a distribution equal to 5% of the market value of all assets of the fund will be made annually to provide for mission work beyond the operating budget of the congregation. The annual distribution will be proposed by the council to the congregation at each annual meeting according to the following guidelines:

- 1) Up to 40% for projects within the local area wherein the congregation resides;
- 2) Up to 40% for ministries and projects within the New England area (including New England Synod)
- 3) Up to 40% for national ministries and organizations, including ELCA churchwide ministries;
- 4) Up to 40% for international ministries and organizations (including ELCA mission efforts)
- 5) Up to 40% for extraordinary programs, capital improvement, other initiatives w/in congregation.

Mission Endowment Fund Balance on September 30, 2025: \$266,878.14.

5% distribution to be approved by congregation at Annual Meeting: \$13,350.

After soliciting suggestions from members of our church, the Memorial Fund Committee proposed the following distributions, which were approved by Immanuel's Church Council at their meeting on Dec. 9.

Category 1 (local area) – distribute 40% (\$5340)

1. El Buen Samaritano Food Program – \$1780 – *Worcester food ministry and other support services.*
2. Worcester Fellowship – \$1780 – *Provides indoor space for spiritual companionship, hot food, and community at All Saints Episcopal Church in Worcester, especially among the homeless.*
3. Dignity Matters – Westboro – \$1780 – *Devoted to addressing period poverty, providing free menstrual products, bras, and underwear to more than 18,000 people in Mass. every month.*

Category 2 (within New England area and synod) – distribute 20% (\$2670)

1. Christian Youth Conference – \$1335 – *Non-denominational camp in Maine that serves high school students; there is a long history and relationship between CYC and our congregation.*
2. Maine Seacoast Mission – \$1335 – *Supporting Sunbeam, a ship that delivers health, educational, and community-building services to residents of outer, unbridged island.*

Category 3 (national ministries and organizations) – distribute 20% (\$2670)

1. K9s for Warriors – \$1335 – *Their mission is to end Veteran suicide by providing highly-trained service dogs to Veterans suffering from PTSD, traumatic brain injury, and other trauma.*
2. Tunnel to Towers – \$1335 – *Provides housing assistance to Veterans and their families.*

Category 4 (international ministries and organizations) – distribute 20% (\$2670)

1. Hope for Our Sisters – \$1335 – *Serves those suffering from fistula with medical care and support.*
2. World Central Kitchen – \$1335 – *Provides fresh meals in response to humanitarian, climate, and other crises.*

2026 Proposed Budget for Immanuel Lutheran Church

	2026 proposed	2025
Income		
Pledged Giving	\$405,000	\$397,500
Unpledged & Loose	\$3,500	\$3,500
Malmstrom Trust	\$18,900	\$16,000
Special Offerings	\$3,000	\$3,600
Nursery School Contribution	\$21,000	\$21,000
Gym User Fees	\$17,000	\$16,000
Interest	\$3,600	\$3,000
Income Total	\$472,000	\$460,600
Expenses		
Outreach		
01 ELCA & NE Synod	\$39,300	\$36,950
03 Reconciling Works	\$1,500	\$3,000
04 Local Mission Support	\$1,200	\$600
05 Mission Partners	\$6,000	\$5,500
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$48,000</i>	<i>\$46,050</i>
Administration		
01 Salaries/Social Security	\$272,000	\$260,000
02 Pension/Health Plan	\$20,800	\$20,840
03 Allowances	\$15,275	\$14,830
04 Continuing Education	\$2,000	\$2,000
05 Auto Expenses	\$1,600	\$1,500
06 Postage	\$1,700	\$1,400
07 Technology	\$2,600	\$2,600
08 Professional Expenses	\$500	\$500
09 Office Supplies	\$1,200	\$1,200
10 Publications	\$225	\$200
12 Office Machine Maint.	\$4,400	\$4,400
13 Conference & Convocation	\$2,000	\$2,000
14 Equipment	\$500	\$0
16 Other - Admin	\$500	\$500
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$325,300</i>	<i>\$311,970</i>
Christian Education		
01 Sunday School Curriculum	\$1,000	\$650
02 Confirmation	\$200	\$200
03 Adult Education	\$300	\$300
04 Young Families	\$200	\$200
05 Church School Supplies	\$250	\$250
08 Bibles and Gifts	\$400	\$100

09 Cradle Roll	\$200	\$200
12 Other - Christian Ed.	\$0	\$0
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$2,550	\$1,900

Worship & Music

01 Organists	\$900	\$900
03 Supply Pastors	\$750	\$750
04 Organ Tuning/Repair	\$3,000	\$3,000
05 Piano Tuning	\$400	\$400
06 Music	\$300	\$300
07 Flowers	\$250	\$200
08 Bulletins	\$200	\$200
09 Worship Supplies + Tech	\$2,000	\$2,000
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$7,800	\$7,750

Council

03 Other - Cong Council	\$500	\$500
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$500	\$500

Ministries

01 Advertising	\$1,000	\$800
02 Stephen Ministries	\$200	\$200
03 New Members	\$200	\$200
04 Youth	\$200	\$200
05 Fellowship Events	\$200	\$200
06 Young Adult	\$0	\$0
07 Meal Packaging	\$2,000	\$2,000
08 Garden	\$100	\$100
09 Mission Expenses	\$150	\$150
10 Senior Activities	\$200	\$300
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$4,250	\$4,150

Stewardship

01 Offering Envelopes	\$500	\$600
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$500	\$600

Property

01 Church Maintenance	\$19,000	\$12,000
02 Parsonage Maintenance	\$1,500	\$1,500
03 Snow Removal/Sanding	\$6,720	\$6,400
04 Insurance	\$18,500	\$17,000
05 Church Electricity	\$2,000	\$4,000
06 Church Water	\$3,000	\$3,000
07 Church Oil	\$14,000	\$12,000
08 Church Telephone	\$2,700	\$2,600
09 Church Gas	\$2,400	\$2,000

10 Parsonage Electricity	\$2,000	\$1,500
11 Parsonage Water	\$1,200	\$1,100
12 Parsonage Oil	\$1,600	\$2,000
15 Sexton's Supplies	\$3,000	\$3,000
16 Rubbish Removal	\$3,000	\$3,000
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$80,620	\$71,100

Capital Fund

01 Capital Fund Transfers	\$10,500	\$16,500
<i>Subtotal</i>	\$10,500	\$16,500

Total Expenses **\$480,020** **\$460,520**

Income Less Expenses **-\$8,020** **\$80**

Nominating Committee Report

Immanuel's Nominating Committee met in November and December to consider who might serve in various positions of leadership within our congregation. After prayerful consideration and discussion, we recommend and nominate:

Church Council (Youth) – expiring 1/2027

Gabriel Ellis Alex Sprague

Church Council – expiring 1/2029

Josh Greene
Lisa Schaffter

Heidi Lahey
Lisa Sternstrom

Memorial Funds Committee – expiring 1/2029

Elizabeth Siler

Audit Committee – expiring 1/2028

Mark Vetter Geriann Dumas

Nominating Committee – expiring 1/2028

Stef Donev (1/2027) Karen White
Kathy Mills Tim Langhill

We thank all those who continue to serve our church in positions of leadership (many of whom are not part of a committee), and especially those who are concluding their service in any way, including:

Council: Kristin Carnevale Stef Donev Scott Hill Emmie Leotsakos
Memorial Funds: Rick Brutto
Nominating: Elise Cranson Rod Schaffter Marie Vogel

Serving our church is both a privilege and a joy! It empowers our whole community to be united in our mission to share the light and love of Christ with the world. We know that God gives each of us different gifts, and that when we use our gifts, the whole church is strengthened and God glorified. Where is God calling you to serve?

Respectfully submitted:
Elise Cranson, Kaylie Harrington, Bill Lahey, Rod Schaffter, Marie Vogel, and Scott Hill

Current Church Council Members

Term Ending 1/27

Nancy Chanson (1st term)
Bonnie Colon (2nd term)
Greta Gridley (1st term)

Term Ending 1/28

Lauren Demerjian (2nd term)
Fred Borchelt (1st term)
Craig Landquist (1st term)