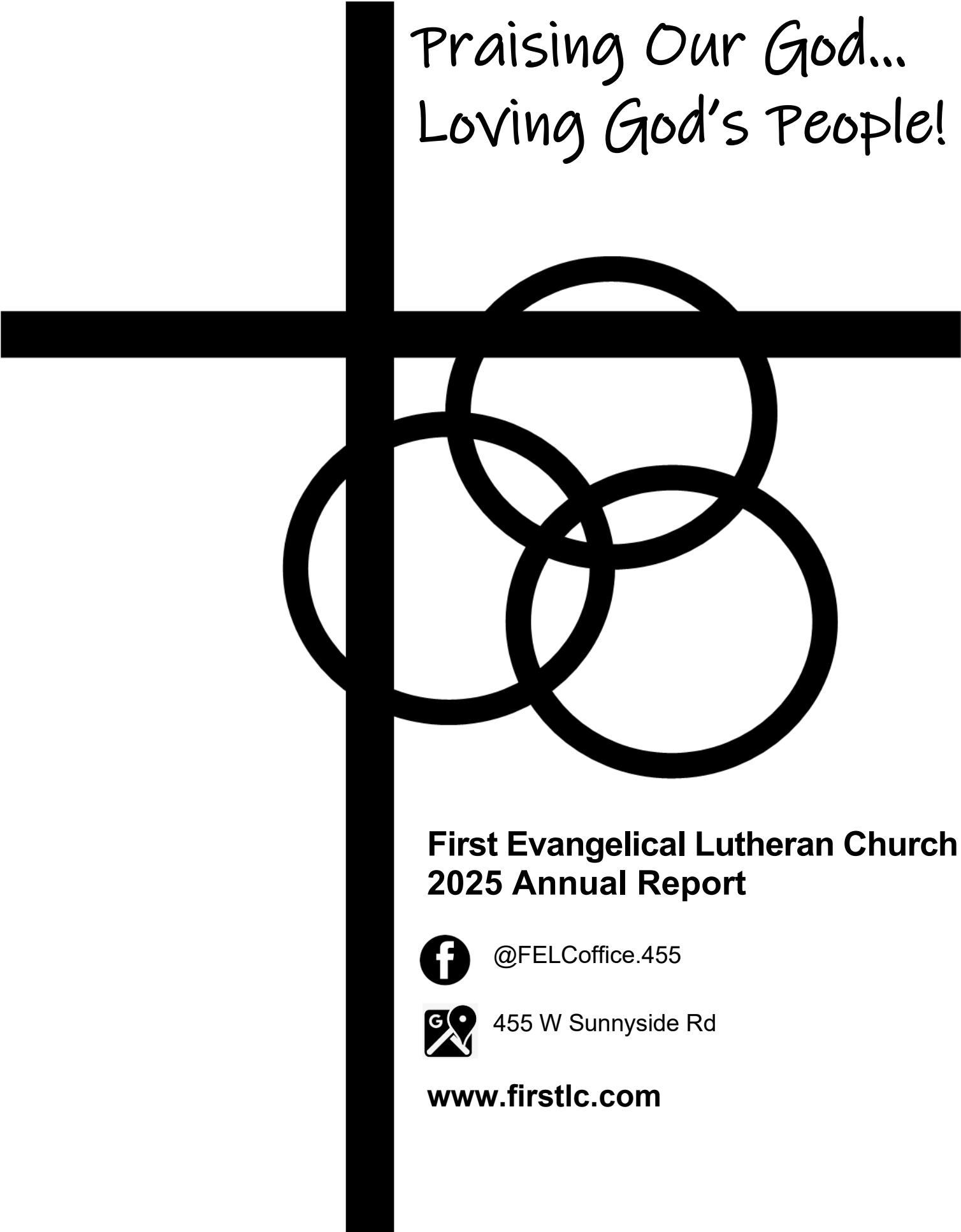




Praising Our God...
Loving God's People!

**First Evangelical Lutheran Church
2025 Annual Report**



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Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda

November 9, 2025

Order of Business:

1. Welcome
2. Call to Order, establishment of quorum
3. Opening Devotion and Prayer
4. Approval of the 2024 Congregational Annual Meetings Minutes (November 3, 2024)
5. FELC Bylaw change
6. Presentation of ballot of candidates for FELC council at large, executive offices and ministry team leaders
7. Presentation of the proposed 2026 Annual Budget
8. Presentation of Annual Reports
9. Presentation of Election Results
10. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

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For surely, I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope.

Jeremiah 29:11

A PRAYER FOR GUIDANCE: Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor and further us with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued and ended in you, we may glorify Your Holy name and finally, by your mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (Lutheran Book of Worship, Fourth Printing 1979; p.49)

A. A Message from Pastor Mike Knauff

Sometimes things jump out at you, off the page, that you don't really expect. Recently I was reading an LCMC newsletter and a comment from an LCMC youth who had returned from a mission trip to Alaska jumped out at me.

“I used to think faith was just about what I believed,” Emma said. “Now I know it’s about who I love, how I serve, and seeing God in every person I meet.”

I’m normally pretty good at speed reading through magazines and newsletters, soaking up the gist of things and not getting bogged down in details. It’s my way of getting a “grab and go” update of what’s happening in other places. But this sentence jumped out at me and stopped me in my tracks, in a good way.

“I used to think faith was just about what I believed,” Emma said. “Now I know it’s about who I love, how I serve, and seeing God in every person I meet.”

Emma’s words profoundly struck me. Her words made me ponder the moments in our life’s journey where our faith hits a crossroad, takes an unexpected turn, and grows in unanticipated ways. Her simple statement eloquently expressed one of those important moments in her faith journey that deeply resonated with me. It was in her serving others that Emma’s faith became bigger than the beliefs she held in her head or heart. Her faith blossomed into **“who I love, how I serve, and seeing God in every person I meet.”** I must admit that my faith has also been similarly expanded in those moments when I too have been “in mission” and “in service” to others.

The following pages of our congregation’s annual report can be something you skim read and get a “grab and go” understanding of what’s happening at FELC. And that will be helpful for our members to obtain a basic understanding of what’s happening at FELC. What would be even better is if in reading these pages something would jump out at you and make you consider how all these ministries that are carried out at FELC provide those “Ah Ha!” moments where:

- lives are changed for the better
- members’ faith is challenged to expand beyond mere beliefs
- members’ actively serving find their faith blossoming and growing
- people discover that faith can include not just beliefs but also who you love, how you serve and in discovering God in the people you meet.

I’m so thankful for all the folks at FELC this past year who contributed to the proclamation of the gospel, whether it was serving on a committee or serving in a soup kitchen. My heart is warmed by reading through these following pages upon pages of reporting and recalling how we at FELC “Praised our God and loved God’s people” this past year. We have such a blessed congregation with so many faithful people serving in so many various ways: in the kitchen, in the sacristy, on the mission team, sewing stitches on quilts and shawls, teaching Sunday School, serving in the community at Champ’s Heart, FISH, and with LOGOS Hope. I’m so grateful to serve a congregation that knows being a church family is more than just agreeing to what we believe on paper. Our faith is also about who we love, how we serve, and discovering God in the people we meet.

To God be the glory,

Pastor Mike

B. Congregational Council President & Executive Committee's Annual Report

On behalf of the church council, I am pleased to present the annual report summarizing our church's activities, achievements, and financial health over the past year. This report reflects our commitment to spiritual growth, Christian education, youth programs, stewardship, and the continued development of our congregation.

This year, our church continued to prioritize meaningful worship experiences and opportunities for spiritual development. Weekly services were well attended in person and online, with average attendance numbers remaining steady. Special services, including Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter were also well attended. Our Sunday school and youth ministries regularly engaged members in deepening their understanding of our Christian faith.

A variety of fellowship and fundraising events have fostered a sense of belonging among members and highlighting how dedicated our volunteers are. The church garage sale, new member reception, the fireworks stand, and the fall ministry team night have brought us together and given us a sense of community in our common goals.

The church's financial position remains stable. We finished 2024 in a strong financial situation – well ahead of our budgeted position for 2024. This established a good start for 2025. We were able to budget for a full-time youth minister. This year our financial position has also been tracking better than our budget. Our treasurer and finance ministry team's diligent stewardship ensured responsible management of resources and transparent reporting to the congregation on a regular basis.

Much of our time this past year was spent on human resource (HR) activities. The executive team has worked on numerous projects to enhance our HR processes and assisted in the hiring of staff positions. Some details on those include:

- Assisted in the hiring of the choir accompanist and full-time youth minister positions. We have started the process for hiring of the office administrator's position with Liisa's upcoming retirement.
- Completed a New Hire Checklist/Package for future hiring.
- Performance reviews for staff as well as job description updates if needed.
- Created job summaries for the executive positions to help in recruiting new executive team members for the future.

First Evangelical Lutheran Church is blessed and grateful for the leadership of our pastor, staff, ministry teams, countless volunteers, and council members who continue to serve with dedication. As we look toward the coming year, our focus will be on supporting our growing Sunday school and youth programs, fostering connections within our community, and encouraging active participation in church activities.

Thank you for your continued support and prayers. Together, we look forward to another year of faithful service and growth. Lisa Swenson, Council President

C. Youth Ministries Annual Report

Unavailable

D. 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes

2024 ANNUAL MEETING
November 3, 2024

President Randy Kay called the meeting to order at 12:02 p.m.

Pastor Mike Knauff began the meeting with a devotion and prayer.

20 voting members must be present to conduct the business of the annual meeting. 75 voting members signed in at the meeting. A quorum was declared. A total of 78 individuals were present at the annual meeting.

Paul Bayless moved that the minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting be approved. Barbara Carlson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Paul Bayless presented the updated First Evangelical Lutheran Church (FELC) Bylaws. A meeting was held on October 13, 2024, to allow congregation members to make comments and recommend changes. The changes were included in the updated Bylaws. DiAnn Brown moved that the updated FELC Bylaws be approved as presented. Amelia McDaniel seconded the motion. The motion carried. The approved Bylaws will go into effect in 30 days in accordance with the FELC Constitution.

Dave McDaniel reviewed the ballot for council members, council officers, and Ministry Team Chairs. He stated that all those listed on the ballot were eligible to be elected. The candidates for church council are Greg Katainen, Diana Murphy, and Mel Rayne-Martin. Pastor Mike Knauff moved that Doug Hilborn be a write-in candidate for a church council member position. Paul Bayless seconded the motion. Paul Bayless moved that nominations be closed. Kim Bermensolo seconded the motion. The motion carried. Several congregation members had cast their ballots prior to the write-in candidate being added to the ballot. New ballots were given to those that requested a ballot. The candidates for council officers are Lisa Swenson, President; Greg Katainen, Vice President; Natalie Meyer, Treasurer; and Mel Rayne-Martin, Secretary. Ministry Team Chairs on the ballot are as follows: Care and Concern – Marda Kirkwood; Discipleship – Brad Kirkwood; Family – Steve Hickman; Fellowship -- Kathy Katainen; Finance – May Hustad; Missions – Karen Bateman and Carol Mason; Property – Steve Galbraith and Heide Larsen; Worship and Music – Debra Holst. Ballots were collected and counted by Liisa Mills, Office Administrator and Dave McDaniel.

Treasurer Natalie Meyer presented the 2025 Annual Budget. She then discussed the budgeting process. Natalie thanked the Finance Ministry Team for the many hours they have spent on reviewing and developing the 2025 budget. She gave a PowerPoint presentation on the 2025 Budget. Natalie informed the members that a half-time position of Youth Coordinator is being changed to a full-time position beginning July 1, 2025. Natalie also stated that a 2.5% cost of living has been included in calculating staff salaries. Natalie informed the members that one-third of the budget is dedicated to Ministry Teams and two-thirds of the budget is dedicated to salaries and benefits. Following the presentation, Natalie asked if there were any questions. Brad Kirkwood stated that because the Church Council had approved the FELC 2025 Budget, that satisfied the requirement for a motion and second. The congregation voted to approve the proposed budget.

Evelyn MacPherson moved to accept the Ministry Teams' annual reports. Amelia McDaniel seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Dave McDaniel thanked the council members who were going off at the end of 2024. He announced that 75 voting members were present, and 78 ballots were received. Dave reported that all those presented for election were elected.

Randy Kay offered a closing prayer.

Paul Bayless moved that the November 3, 2024, First Evangelical Lutheran Church Annual Congregation Meeting be adjourned. Amelia McDaniel seconded the motion. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 12:47 p.m.

E. First Evangelical Lutheran Church's Statement of Faith

We believe, teach, and confess the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We believe, teach, and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe in him.

- Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death, and resurrection God fashions a new creation.
- The proclamation of God's message to us as both law and gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy in the person and work of Jesus Christ, through whom God was pleased to reconcile all things to himself.
- The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God. Inspired by God's Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God's revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them God's Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.

We believe, teach, and accept the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the sole authoritative source and norm of our proclamation, faith, and life.

We accept the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the scriptural faith we believe, teach, and confess.

We believe, teach, and accept the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism as true witnesses to the Word of God, normative for our teaching and practice. We acknowledge that we are one in faith and doctrine with all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.

We believe, teach, and confess the other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles, the Treatise, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid expositions of the Holy Scriptures.

We believe, teach, and confess the gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures, and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the priesthood of all believers for God's mission in the world.

F. LCMC District Report:

LCMC Intermountain West Report 2025

FELC is a member of the Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ, an association that has grown in two decades to 840 Lutheran congregations in 39 states and another 194 in 17 countries and Canadian provinces. The LCMC is focused upon supporting the member churches where Christian Life is carried and giving them the freedom to shape ministry and mission in their local settings. The church is organized into numerous districts which are based upon regional and also special interest groupings of LCMC churches. FELC is a member of the Intermountain West district, consisting of 9 churches that run along the I-15 corridor from Idaho Falls to Sandy, Utah. We are both a geographical and a special interest district, with our special interest of: "Doing mission in a region with a predominantly Mormon population." Each church is represented by its Pastor and a Lay member on a District Board that is like a church council for the district. The district board now meets bi-monthly by Zoom Chat to discuss information about the greater LCMC, represent the LCMC in the Utah-Southern Idaho area, share information about activities in individual churches and plan district-wide activities, like the biennial Gathering, the Youth Summer Camp in Park City, Utah and hopefully will continue the district Men's Group Retreat in the late summer. Several of our pastors (including Pastor Mike) were able to attend

the yearly LCMC church-wide assembly that was held this year at Hosanna Lutheran Church in Lakeville, Minnesota, a suburb of St. Paul to connect us with the rest of the denomination.

The district board has concentrated much of its effort the past two years in revising its Constitution and By-Laws to eliminate unnecessary start-up provisions, streamline its prose to make it more understandable to members and bring these documents into line to how the board believes the district should operate. These significantly revised documents have been approved by the District board and will be voted upon by the delegates to next spring's (2026) district-wide Gathering to be held at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Sandy Utah.

Brad Kirkwood

LCMC Intermountain West District Vice Coordinator and District Board Member for FELC

G. Ministry Team Individual Reports:

1. Care & Concern Ministry Team Annual Report

Charter Description: *The Care & Concern Ministry Team is chartered to oversee the extension of Christian compassion and aid to members and non-members having special needs and shall help all other members of the congregation to do likewise. The team shall act as a liaison between these ministries and the congregation and council, communicating needs, opportunities and social concerns within the congregation. This ministry will offer service (as deemed appropriate by the team and Pastoral staff and/or church council) to members and non-members alike who are in need of care.*

Team Members: Marda Kirkwood (Chair), Cathy Abreu (Parish Nurse, Vice Chair), Doug Hilborn (Council Liaison and Visitation), Annick Dixon (Stephen Ministry), Jan Waaler (Prayer Shawls), Anne Mitchell (Funeral Meals), Kim Bermensolo (Funeral Meals), Linda Lerum (Prayer Chain), Geri Magnuson (Meals in Crisis, Care Notes, Transportation), Richard Magnuson (Transportation)

CARE & CONCERN ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2024-2025:

- 1) Stephen Ministry – We currently have 11 active, trained Stephen Ministers. That means that at any given time, 11 individuals have someone to walk alongside them as they are going through a difficult time. We are not only ministering to individuals in our congregation, we are also ministering to individuals outside our congregation. Our 2025 roster of fully trained active Stephen Ministers includes: Shawn Cleverly, Ryan Dixon, Elaine Harris, Doug Hilborn, Sandra Kruger, Geri Magnuson, David McDaniel, Nonda Meyer, Eileen Pierce, Jim Sahr, Judy Sahr, Beverly Thomas, and Jane Winston. Stephen Ministry Leaders are Pastor Mike Knauff and Annick Dixon.
- 2) Funeral Meals – From October 2024 through September 2025, funeral meals were provided for the families and friends of Bob Dixon, Eric Gilbert, and Marty Huebner.
- 3) Prayer Chain Ministry -- The Prayer Chain at FELC continues to pray for people in need. This fiscal year, there were 79 people on the chain who prayed for many requests. We always welcome more people to join us in prayer. It is as simple as emailing the church office to begin receiving prayer requests. Then they will come to your inbox and you can pray as the Holy Spirit leads you. To submit a prayer for the prayer chain, you may email the office.
- 4) Prayer Shawls – From October 2024 through September 2025, nineteen shawls were distributed by volunteers. Five of these were given to new member families as welcome gifts. Yarn is available for volunteers to use to make prayer shawls. The shawls and yarn for volunteers are in the closet on the east side of the fellowship hall.

- 5) Meals in Crisis – Two families were provided meals in 2024-2025. Offers of meals were made to six other families or individuals experiencing illnesses or surgeries who declined.
- 6) Care Notes – Faith pamphlets have been added to the Care Notes rack.
- 7) Transportation – For 2024-2025, six people received rides to church from six volunteer drivers, with one substitute.
- 8) Visitation – This new ministry has been formed to meet the needs of certain individuals within our congregation and community. The ministry focus is to serve members and friends of the congregation who because of life circumstances (age, disability, etc.) may be isolated, lonely, or in need of minor assistance. The Visitation ministry is in its infancy and currently in the process of development. In the immediate future there are 2 preliminary goals
 - Meeting with the pastor to identify those in need of this program
 - Recruiting volunteers to commit to this ministry.
- 9) Parish Nurse
 - Facilitated Red Cross blood drives January 2025 and July 2025.
 - Blood pressures have been taken upon request, as well as health and wellness discussions.
 - Collection of expired/unneeded medications is ongoing. Disposal of medications in State of Idaho medication disposal boxes located at Idaho Falls Police Department and locked medication bin at Walgreens in Ammon, Idaho, as needed, as secure boxes are filled.
 - One hospital visit.
 - No nursing home visits.
 - Several phone checks completed through the year.
 - Monthly battery checks completed on AED and documented. Expiration dates checked on batteries, adult and pediatric conduction pads. Batteries and adult conduction pads replaced this year.

Care and Concern is a ministry team whose focus is on the care of this worshiping community. We always strive to provide Christian care for those who worship with us at First Lutheran, whether or not they hold official membership. Our ministry also includes meals for those in crisis, offering care notes to the congregation and visitors, and an incredible group of Christians who “step into the gap” to pray for others through our Prayer Chain ministry and reach out to those feeling isolated. The ministry naturally extends to those outside the congregation through the loving care of our members. We prayerfully look to continue these ministries and to seek ways to bring Christ’s love to others, within and without our congregation.

GOALS FOR 2025-2026

- 1) Continue to support the administration needs of Stephen Ministry: (a) Assure that gifted leaders attend Leadership Training and offer training to more Ministry candidates as the need arises; (b) Evaluate the program to fit FELC needs.
- 2) Recruit more volunteer drivers to meet our growing need to transport people to church and to help with the new visitation ministry.
- 3) Explore and promote creative ideas for caring support between members.
- 4) Continue to make an effort to recruit and invite others to join us in this Ministry Team as we continue to provide Christian care and share Christ’s love with this worshiping community.

² *Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; ³ not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.” - 1 Peter 5:2-3*

2. Christian Education Ministry Team Annual Report

Charter Description

FELC's Christian Education Ministry team exists to provide FELC members with Christian education opportunities based upon and consistent with Biblical teaching.

This past year was amazing for FELC's Youth Ministry. Youth Ministry is a work of the Church done with five purposes: education, worship, fellowship, discipleship, and evangelism. FELC was able to successfully accomplish all five of these through multiple Sunday school levels, youth activities, an active confirmation group, first communion classes, Christmas pageant, and Day Camps during this summer. FELC also hosted a Trunk or Treat night and fireworks sale.

During the last year the youth enjoyed many activities. The Sunday School year kicked off with Rally Sunday. The kickoff theme was "Glow with God." We painted with glow in the dark paint and made crafts with glow sticks. We were able to do a Christmas Pageant that included all ages of youth actively in our programs. The Penny power favorite was buying chicks and pigs for farmers in third world countries through Lutheran world gifts. Champ's Heart Sunday was a big hit with Pastor Larry sharing his mini horses with us! On Easter Sunday 200 eggs were "hidden" in the green area for our Easter egg hunt. Our end of the year party had games, crafts and treats in the picnic area! Over the Summer we were able to host Luther Heights Day camp where we had 17 youth attend as well as 2 junior high helpers. It was a huge success.

God is good! He has again blessed us with abundance! Many families with young children now attend with us. With the joining of so many young families who have a wide age range of children, enrollment in Sunday School and Nursery has boomed. So much so that there was a need for two classes for the elementary-aged kids during the current Sunday School year. We now have three Sunday education groups that meet weekly. Christian Education was also able to find enough consistent volunteers to staff all of the classes! Everyone is excited to continue with another successful year.

3. Discipleship Ministry Team Annual Report

Charter Description

The Discipleship Ministry Team exists to oversee and help develop the spiritual thermostat of the congregation through making disciples of all ages.

In 2025, the joint Discipleship Team of last year was separated into its three ministry team components: Christian Education, Family and the Outreach/ Evangelism/Adult Sunday School. The Outreach, Evangelism and Adult Sunday School component is now known as the Discipleship Team.

The team met several times in 2024 to develop separate mission statements for each component of the joint team. These statements included goals and potential programs /activities so each component could split each into a separate ministry team, approved by the Church Council.

1. Adult Sunday school began our new strategy of short 4- to 10-week classes in 2024-2025 to lessen the continuity problem of individuals missing a Sunday. We began last fall by reading and discussing Max Lucado's book based upon David's 23rd Psalm. In the spring, we offered a short 6-week version (it lasted 8 with two review sessions) of the "Sharing Jesus" class from three years ago. This class focused on short, 5-to-10-minute methods to share your faith coupled with memorization of 15 key Bible verses, very practical for Christians in a modern

world. We started this fall's adult class with Pastor Mike teaching a short 4-week course of Revelation and end times prophesies. During the rest of the year, we will follow the same outline as the children's Sunday school's "tour through the Bible" with the intent of fostering intergenerational discussions.

2. "The Chosen," a serial Christian television show, has been shown as a Bible Study/ Small Group/Fellowship activity on Wednesday evenings in the Fellowship Hall for several years. We are now in the fifth season of the series.
3. A Bible Study for women continues to be offered weekly September through April on Wednesday afternoons. The study uses the "Story through the Bible" method pioneered by The Navigators with leaders Carole Mason and Marda Kirkwood. In the fall of 2025, the study continues to use "Bible Story Favorites" as its theme.
4. A similar Bible Study for men was started last January that meets at 9.00 a.m. on Thursday mornings at the beginning of the "Kaffeeklatsch." This class also uses the "Story through the Bible" method. The series began with the theme of "Jesus' Family Tree" last spring and completed in the summer with "End Times Events." New attendees, members and non-members are always welcome to take part in our four adult Bible studies.
5. The FELC office "window" is now open on Sunday mornings. The intent of the Outreach team is to use this window as a "Welcome Booth" to provide directions and information to visitors about FELC (maps, etc.). Information cards about each of our ministries, ministry teams and the missions that we support are nearly all complete and will be posted at this "window." These cards will be helpful for guests and visitors to learn more about FELC.

Brad Kirkwood for FELC Discipleship Team

4. Family Ministry Team Annual Report

Charter Description

The Family Ministry team exists for three main purposes:

1. Provide opportunities for multi-generational interaction, events and leaderships for the nurturing and growth of Christian relationships.
2. Provide instruction and support of parents/guardians in providing a Christian home environment.
3. Create lifelong active disciples of Jesus Christ, serving as beacons in their community.

FELC Family Ministry Team Report

Unavailable

5. Fellowship Ministry Team Annual Report

FELLOWSHIP submitted by Kathy Katainen

Charter Description

The Fellowship Ministry shall plan and carry out activities to enhance our Christian fellowship among members of the congregation and with visitors to our church. Promote involvement in these activities with other ministry teams and by people of all ages, interests, backgrounds, and types of family status.

Fellowship - Tasks completed for 2025.

Fellowship has been blessed with generous congregants who add to our kitty so we can continue to purchase treats during the year. We also have people who regularly bring us home baked and canned goods to share during coffee hour and at other occasions.

Thank you.

We have kept a somewhat low profile this year, mainly serving refreshments after Sunday services. The team also regularly helps at funerals and other events.

As we continue to serve, the team grows one at a time. We've added two more members: Deborah Hustad and Trina Jacobson. This has helped us to have enough working hands that the team can take vacations and still know there is ample help. Again, I want to thank those who notice and drop in to lend a hand when we are short on clean-up crew.

We will continue as we have been, serving coffee and a light snack. One activity we'd like to add for the next year is: resurrect potlucks on occasion. We hope the church body will welcome them as well.

Team members:

Kathy Katainen – Chairperson

Tim & May Hustad, Jacki Potter, Debra Hustad, Trina Jacobson

Greg Katainen – Council Liaison

Men's Ministry Team Annual Report**Summary**

The Men's Ministry ran Bible studies and two service projects in 2025. Monthly Saturday meetings with Pastor Mike were held early in the year but were discontinued because of family and work conflicts. A weekly Thursday morning Bible study at 9:00 a.m., held before Kaffeeklatsch, replaced the Saturday meeting and has strong attendance. Kaffeeklatsch attendance skews toward retirees, indicating a need for activities that attract men with a lower level of life experience.

Meetings and Bible Study

- **Saturday monthly meeting:** Held early in the year; included a Bible study led by **Pastor Mike**; discontinued due to family and work scheduling conflicts.
- **Thursday weekly Bible study:** Meets at **9:00 a.m.** before Kaffeeklatsch; well attended and consistent; serves as the primary ongoing meeting for the ministry.

6. Finance / Stewardship Ministry Team Report**Charter Description**

The Finance Ministry Team is chartered to oversee the preparation of a draft budget and stewardship plan for the year. This ministry promotes the expression of Christian Faith in daily living through the education of the Christian use of time, talents, and treasures. This ministry oversees the congregational investments and banking activities as directed by the Congregation Council and ensures all business conducted by the church is legal, ethical, and fiscally responsible.

Finance Team Annual Report

The Finance team participated in the following operation and events over the past year:

- Monthly review of the Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Statements

- Received periodic updates from the Endowment Team, made recommendations for investment opportunities and review grant money set aside for the year
- 2024 Annual Giving statements were sent out in January
- A reminder was sent out on giving opportunities for Required Minimum Distributions and Qualified Charitable Distributions in February.
- Sponsored one of the Lent Soup Suppers in March
- Sent out in September the annual Stewardship letter, pledge cards and 2025 YTD August Giving Statements.
- In the process of working with Bruce Denney of Poston, Denney, Killpack PLLC., on the Policy and Procedures to be used for the Annual Financial Review
- Work with Ministry teams to develop and prepare the 2026 Budget for the Annual Congregational Meeting
- Delivered recommendations for the 2026 Annual Budget to Council for approval at the Annual Congregational Meeting
- Annual Staff Compensation letter to advise staff of pay changes after the annual budget is approved

2025 Finance Team Members: Natalie Meyer – Treasurer, Paul Bayless – Council Liaison and Lead Counter, Wendy Schoonmaker – Financial Secretary, Greg Stultz – Bookkeeper, Jim Sahr – Stewardship, Raff McDonald – Endowment, May Hustad - Chair

Endowment Fund Annual Report

The endowment fund has enjoyed a productive year. With the congregational support and growth of the fund's investment income, the endowment fund may be in the best financial condition it has ever known. The fund was able to provide grant money of \$4770 for special financial requests from the Happy Stitchers, Pastor Knauff and the Property ministry. The total asset balance at the end of 2024 was \$119,254 and after the disbursement of the \$4770 grant money the fund has a balance of \$133,062 at the conclusion of the third quarter. If the fund continues to be blessed in the coming year as it has been this year, we can anticipate the availability of special church need grants in excess of \$5000. The committee is thankful for your continued support and looks forward to providing help to the special needs of our ministry teams and organizations.

Memorial Ministry Annual Report

The Memorial Ministry reports to and is a part of the Finance Ministry. Its primary function is to coordinate the receipt and expenditure of donated Memorial funds. Since the 2024 annual report, memorial donations have been received in memory of the following and funds distributed as designated:

- Kenna Howard (1/23/2025)
- Bob Dixon (3/22/2025) graveside
- Eric Gilbert (5/3/2025)
- Marty Huebner (7/12/2025)
- John Catanese (7/21/2025)
- Betty Neal (8/2/2025)

Thank you to Liisa Mills for her continuing help with this ministry.

Ministry Chair: Susan Hindman

7. Missions Ministry Team Annual Report

Charter Description

The Missions Ministry Team is chartered to extend God's love into our community, region and world in practical ways of applying labor and congregational benevolence giving. The team coordinates First Evangelical Lutheran Church support for and contact between FELC and individual missionaries, churches and ministries locally and globally.

Our church has always been very generous and giving, and your Missions team has aimed to support this spirit of giving through service, both globally and in our community during this year.

The goal of the Missions team is to facilitate helping those in need by organizing fundraisers and using the congregation's budgeted money to aid a variety of local and global charitable organizations. In this endeavor, the committee spends time reviewing each organization to which we donate to ensure that the funding is used appropriately, in line with the congregation's values. Each month, we emphasize a different community, and through the generous support of our congregation, this year we were able to help agencies such as FISH, the Community Food Basket, Meals on Wheels, Habitat for Humanity, Gideon's, Lutheran World Relief Gifts, Hospice of Eastern Idaho, Champ's Heart, Foster Village, Lutheran Comfort Dogs and Camp Magical Moments with contributions. We believe Luther Heights is important for our youth, so we have continued to support this mission helping with day camp at First Lutheran and sponsoring children that attend church camps.

We have volunteers who pack and deliver school backpacks, respond to requests through FISH, support Regional Council, and support the Idaho Falls Humanitarian Center. This year we continued to deliver weekend backpacks of food for students to five elementary schools throughout District 93. The team also provides support through fiscal support to the Happy Stitchers. Our church was open for the 4th of July, and members gave out water and popcorn to visitors attending the fireworks show. We donated money to the Christian Motorcycle group for their Run for the Son Race. We continued to support Wounded Blue and their K-9 dogs and Ship to Shore. The Wounded Blue group offers comfort and hope to individuals dealing with difficult and life-altering events. Ship to Shore brings the Gospel to people throughout the world.

Penny Power is another ongoing project, which has been very successful in involving our youth; the children are involved with deciding how to spend these funds. So far, we have purchased hygiene products for Humanitarian Center, Bibles for the Gideons and dog toys for Rahab and Micah, the two support dogs we sponsor through Lutheran Comfort Dogs. Together with our Sunday School children, we filled boxes for Operation Christmas Child. Penny Power also purchased animals to help farmers in third world countries through Lutheran World Relief Gifts. Together with contributions from the congregation we sponsored a child at Camp Magical Moments in Swan Valley and one day provided lunch for the children at the camp. We provided funds for a Hong Kong refugee to attend summer camp. We donated to Champ's Heart VETS program. In December, we provided hams for St. Vincent de Paul Christmas Baskets. At Christmas, we teamed up with Salvation Army to ensure three families celebrated Christmas with gifts for children and adults and food for Christmas dinner. In 2025, we supported three worldwide charitable organizations: Lutheran Bible Translators, Lutheran World Relief Gifts, and Lutheran World Relief, the latter of which provides food, clothing, shelter, and medical care internationally to those in need. Finally, the team supports Lutheran missionaries, Jeff and Miriam Nellermoe, who are continuing to deliver the Gospel to people in China.

First Lutheran has always been a generous congregation, and 2025 was no exception! Your compassionate giving is significant in helping the community and the world. We thank you, and your giving is greatly appreciated!

***And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.
Hebrews 13:16***

Happy Stitchers Ministry Team Annual Report

HAPPY STITCHERS

8/31/2024 – 9/1/2025



“Wrapping the world in God’s love, one quilt at a time”

Happy Stitchers includes four different groups

1. Happy Stitchers – meets Tuesday from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon (comfort quilts)
2. Bible study—meets 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month from noon - 1:30 pm
3. Friends in Stitches -- meets Friday 10:00 am- 4:00 pm (open sewing forum)
4. Piece by Peace – makes quilts for high school graduating seniors (springtime)

Bible Study

The study is held every first and third Tuesday of the month, from 12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.

We are doing a study comparing the four gospels using the book Matthew, Mark, Luke, & John Side By Side... Parallel Gospels in Harmony. We learn so much that we are continuing this study into the next year. We thank Linda Lerum for her willingness to share her knowledge and time, leading us in this fascinating study. Everyone is welcome to join us at any time.

The Stitchers continue to fine tune our room. We are grateful for this space and thank everyone who helped with their time, financial aid, and talents. We also thank all who continue to donate to our ministry with boxes of fabric, notions, sewing machines, etc. With grants from the endowment fund, we were able to continue printing Bible verses on fabric for all our quilts and help with providing quilts to our graduating seniors. This past year the Lord has blessed us with many new people joining us. Because of them, we can make and give away many more quilts, spreading God’s Love.

MISSION OUTREACH – 444 various sized quilts were given away. Highlights include:

- 19 specifically-designed lap quilts to FELC Preschool children
- 3 baptismal quilts to Individuals being baptized (adults and children)
- 11 specifically-designed full size quilts to FELC graduating high school seniors
- 171 lap quilts to EIRMC
- 4 quilts to various “in need” individuals
- 72 lap-sized quilts given to Chaplain Christa Trinchera (with the National Chaplain Development Program): 3 full-size police themed quilts were given to the Resilience Rooms: quilts also were sent to the Wounded Blue, Little Houses for Vets (Boise, ID), and first responders
- 60 lap quilts to The Village (Foster children program)
- 28 doll quilts donated to EIRMC for Christmas baskets
- 55 shoeboxes to Operation Christmas Child and helped the Sunday School with an additional 34 boxes totaling 89 boxes
- 44 small quilts and 24 animal beds to the Snake River Animal Shelter
- 3 fleece blankets to Animal Transport
- 2 large quilts to Champs Heart
- 4549 full, queen, youth, & baby quilts have been given away since 1988.

YEAR AT A GLANCE

September- October 2024

- Blessing of the Quilts: over 171 quilts were displayed over the church pews and blessed during the Sunday service. Additional items included 2 large dog beds and 2 special-design fireman quilts for the Resilience Room

November 2024

- Shoeboxes filled with toys, hygiene products, sewing kits donated to Operation Christmas Child

December 2024

- Doll-sized quilts donated for EIRMC Christmas baskets.

April 2025

- FELC preschool children each received a specially-designed quilt during a demonstration of "What goes into making a quilt?" The children designed 2 lap quilts that will be donated to EIRMC.

May- August 2025

- Presentation of full-sized quilts to 11 graduating High School Seniors.
- Giving our quilts expanded to include The Village (foster children) and the National Chaplain Development Program (Chaplain Christa Trinchera)
- 4 youths joined us for the summer program. They learned about the many facets of quilting. It was great fun with lots of laughter as we learned from each other.
- Had our 1st week-long quilting retreat
- Continued supplying 2 fully-stocked sewing rooms (fabrics, kits, irons, rulers, sewing machines, yarn, thread, notions, etc.) to the Navajo Indian Reservation (Four Corners area).

ITEMS OF INTEREST

- A big thank you to the Men's Ministry for making grilled burgers for our end-of-summer picnic.
- Continued decorating of our "tree" by the Happy Stitchers' door by Cindy Robello and her husband (check out the wonderful décor each month).
- With endowment funds, Marda Kirkwood continues to design fabric squares with printed scripture verses, some with picture backgrounds. Currently, we have 66 picture verses and 204 plain verses to choose from. Many thanks to those that submitted their own pictures in this endeavor. These squares are included in all quilts, helping to share God's word with the recipients.
- Our new labels, honoring Marie Matthewson who passed away in January 2022, continue to inspire us and others.



Happy Stitchers Coordinator - Irena McDaniel
FACEBOOK page editor - Amelia McDaniel happystitchers/felcidahofalls

Preschool Annual Report 2025

Our First Lutheran Preschool 2025-2026 school year started strong with 20 preschool children and several wonderful weeks. Our first day was September 9th. We currently have 3 openings in the afternoon session and 1 in the morning. This is a community outreach with 17 non-member children. All year we will be working on introducing the letters of the alphabet and their sounds, numbers 1-29, colors and shapes, scissor skills, and we memorize 11 Bible verses over the school year. We will also

introduce preschool level math, science and social studies. The children will enjoy creating many craft projects throughout the year.

We look forward to attending chapel with Pastor Mike. Through stories and songs, he reinforces the message that we are each a special child of God and how much He loves us. We truly appreciate Pastor Mike's enthusiasm and participation.

This summer we had some exciting changes and improvements. Our playground underwent a revitalization of the lawn and overall area. Huge thank you to Chris Schoonmaker, Steve Galbraith, Michelle Hanson, Paul Bayless, Erick Carlson, and Greg Stultz for your help. We retired some old playground equipment and bought a new climbing piece. The students are enjoying the updated space. The State of Idaho has changed its procedures and requirements concerning Day Care Licensing (which our preschool falls under), so we have been transitioning from our City License to a State License. While not complicated, it is an ongoing process which will be completed between April-June of 2026.

As a part of the Early Childhood Vision, the preschool provides scholarships for those who cannot afford the full tuition. This year we currently have 7 families who are receiving tuition help. We thank FELC for your generous assistance with this program. If you would like to help individually with this program, please contact Barbara or Michelle.

Your Preschool Director,
Barbara Carlson
October 8, 2025

8. Property Ministry Team Annual Report

Charter Description

The Property Ministry shall see to the proper maintenance and protection of all property of the congregation and shall take care that it is kept in good repair and adequately insured. This committee shall maintain and update yearly a five-year projection of foreseeable maintenance and replacement costs. It shall recommend to the Council adequate types and base of insurance coverage for congregational properties and liabilities. The Property Ministry will make recommendations on custodial staffing needs and provide input on job descriptions and performance evaluations.

In addition to all the general upkeep and maintenance activities around the church, the Property Team has been busy! Following is a brief list of the Property Team's accomplishments for 2025:

- ☐ Installed more new LED lights in the parking lot in two locations (thank you Jay Meyer and Shawn Cleverly)
- ☐ Installed two LED lights on the poles adjacent to the church main entry door (thank you Jay Meyer and Shawn Cleverly)
- ☐ Continue to struggle with roof leaks
- ☐ Stripped and waxed the Fellowship Hall floor
- ☐ Annual grounds cleanup
- ☐ Maintained building HVAC, Fire Protection Systems, hot water, and utilities
- ☐ Maintained the landscaping (thank you Heide Larsen)
- ☐ Maintained lawn sprinkler system (thank you Chris Schoonmaker)
- ☐ Administer lawn care, snow removal, and HVAC contracts.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Galbraith

Current Property Team members:
Steve Galbraith – Chairperson
Heide Larsen
Doug Hilborn

Alex Dean
Shawn Cleverly
David Nicholas
Greg Stultz
David Sheldon
Chris Schoonmaker
Tom Pilkington – Council Liaison

Shofar Ministry Team Annual Report

Charter Description

The Shofar Security Team Ministry is to prayerfully protect from physical harm all persons attending the worship service(s) of FELC. Use of the Shofar Team at other, on-site church activities will be decided on a case-by-case basis as the request applies to the policies and procedures of the Shofar ministry.

Shofar Team Annual Report FY25:

The Shofar Security Team ministry was chartered in 2017 to prayerfully protect from physical harm all persons attending worship service(s) of First Evangelical Lutheran Church. The focus is on Sunday morning educational and worship activities, and has included Wednesday night Advent and Lenten services, as well as most of the funeral services at FELC. Shofar strives to balance physical security with a warm and welcoming environment for Worship. Shofar does not operate outside the physical boundaries of FELC property.

Shofar Team security responsibilities have grown and now include discreetly providing physical security, assisting in medical response, monitoring surveillance cameras, interfacing with responding Police and Sheriff personnel, assisting with crowd control, parking lot traffic control, supporting team training, providing technical electronic support, and helping generate Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for foreseeable emergencies. This larger group of both armed and unarmed volunteers fulfills an Emergency Response Team (ERT) function. The ERT meets monthly in the Church Library on the 1st Sunday of the Month. If you would like to assist in any of these areas, please contact me or the Church Office.

In the fiscal year 2025, physical upgrades for security included updating three existing cameras, the installation of new cameras observing the Education wing, Nursery, and Playground areas, and a camera observing the side entrance to the FELC Office. These upgrades better protect Church Staff and property, ensure the safety of our children, and ensure that Worship proceeds peacefully without interruption.

Shofar is currently updating a Risk Assessment to better align resources, training, and physical security upgrades. Statistically, Idaho and Idaho Falls have a low crime rate compared to the Nation. Typical threats to Churches include, in rough order of occurrence:

- Medical Emergencies
- Disruption from protests and activism
- Theft/embezzlement
- Vandalism
- Child abuse / Sexual abuse / Kidnapping
- Physical violence, assault, threats, domestic abuse
- Arson / Bomb Threat
- Deadly attacks with weapons: clubs, knives, guns, and vehicles.

Respectfully Submitted,

Harlan F. Lerum II
ERT/Shofar Team Lead

9. Worship & Music Ministry Team Annual Report

Charter Description

The Worship & Music ministry team is responsible for most of the activities associated with the worship services. The sign board along Sunnyside also falls under the purview of this team.

Thank you to all of those who volunteered as liturgists, communion assistants, ushers, greeters, altar guild members, streaming technicians, and ministry team members, as well as to those who participate in special projects during the year. Thanks as well to those who shared their musical talents by singing, ringing, or playing instruments to enhance our worship experience. A special thanks as well to Debra Holst, who was the ministry team chair for the first part of the year.

In addition to our normal Sunday worship services, Advent and Lenten mid-week services were conducted, with additional worship services on Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday.

We have four standing musical groups that provided music for Sunday morning worship from October through May. Our Music Director Michelle Hanson led the Grace Note (adult) and King's Men vocal choirs, as well as the For His Glory Ringers handbell choir; and Steve Galbraith led the praise band. Heidi Bessette served as the accompanist for the Grace Note choir, allowing Michelle to more effectively direct that choir.

A couple of major expenditures occurred this year. The sanctuary Christmas tree had seen better days, and was falling apart, so a new tree has been purchased; we will likely need to have a "fluffing of the tree" event when Advent rolls around. Also, new components for the sound system were acquired to enhance the system capabilities.

We can always use more help with the worship services, either on Sunday morning or in preparations during the week. If you are interested, please contact me or the church office. Similarly, if you have musical gifts you would like to uncover or share, all of the choirs could use additional members; just contact either Michelle or Steve.

And finally, if you have any questions, concerns, comments, or suggestions about the worship services or the music program, please contact me or someone else on the ministry team.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Bayless, chair

Worship & Music Team Members

Team Chair: Paul Bayless
Council Liaison: Diana Murphy
Music Director: Michelle Hanson
Altar Guild Coordinator: Cathi Bean
Member At Large: Nonda Meyer

H. FELC's 2025 Statistical Report

The following statistical figures are based on information obtained as of November 1, 2025.

2025 Active Membership Status:

Households: 174

Individuals: 375

2025 Attendance Statistics: November 1, 2024 – October 31, 2025

Average per service: 140 in-person worship, 95 on-line streaming

Nursery: 8

Sunday School: 10

Adult Forum: 13

2025 Pastoral Events November 1, 2024 – October 31, 2025:

Baptisms: 5

Weddings: 0

Funerals: 6

Confirmation: 5

New Members: 10

First Communion: 6