Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church



Congregational Assembly

(also known as Voters' Meeting)

November 16, 2025

12:30PM

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church – Durham, NC
Congregational Assembly – Sunday, November 16, 2025

Our Mission
Going with Good News: teaching, serving, and sharing Christ with our neighbors

Our Vision
To be a people able to be church wherever we are

Our Values
Grow with Jesus. Rejoice in God. Answer with Hope.
Care for the neighbor. Embrace Community.

AGENDA

1. Opening Prayer – Pastor Brooks
2. Reading and Approval of Proxies
3. Presentation of New Voters
4. Approval of Minutes from last meeting
5. Pastor's Comments
6. Statistical Reports (see attachment)
7. Ministry Reports (see attachments)
8. Fund the Ministry for 2026 (see attachments)
9. Announcements, Other Business, Open Discussion
10. Adjournment
11. Closing Prayer – All in unison

    Heavenly Father,
    We come before You with grateful hearts, thankful for the opportunity to gather as a community of faith. As we conclude this meeting, we acknowledge Your presence among us and the guidance You have provided in our discussions and decisions.
    Thank You for the wisdom that has been shared and the voices that have been heard both in this place and in the ongoing Kingdom work of this congregation.
    We are grateful for the resources entrusted to us and for the collective commitment to steward them wisely for the benefit of our congregation and the mission You have called us to fulfill. As we move forward, may the decisions made today reflect Your will and purposes. Help us to unite in love and purpose to steward our resources wisely in support of the advancing of Your Kingdom. Grant us the strength to work together in harmony, embracing the diverse gifts, strengths and talents within our congregation.
    May we be a light in our community, sharing Your love and grace with those around us. Let us remember that "You are the One who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us" (Ephesians 3:20 ESV).
    We ask all of this in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Minutes of Voters' Meeting – May 18, 2025

1. ***Meeting called to orde*r** at 11:30am with opening prayer by Pastor Brooks.

2. ***Reading and Approval of Proxies:***
   - Brandi de Talence – proxy given to Dede Crosmer
   - Jean Pochert – proxy given to Joyce Rea
   - Barbara Silvernail – proxy given to Chris Wethman

   Motion made (Elmo Watson) to accept proxies and **seconded** (Kathy Peterson)
   Discussion – none
   Motion approved & quorum reached

3. ***Presentation of New Voters***
   Jenna & Drew Young

4. ***Approval of Last Voters Meeting*** (November 17, 2024)
   Motion made (Karen Kreymborg) and **seconded** (Kathy Peterson) to accept the minutes.
   Discussion – none
   Motion approved

5. ***Pastor's Comments***
   - Pastor Brooks encouraged us to think about Grace Lutheran Church as part of estate planning.
   - Chris Wethman shared that our former District President John Denninger would be good person to invite to speak on resources within our district. He works for the LCMS Foundation as the SED's dedicated gift-planning counselor.

6. ***Statistical Report*** (October 2024 – April 2025)
   Questions/Discussion – none

7. ***Board & Ministry Reports***
   Questions/Discussion – none

8. ***Elections of Officers*** *(to start June 1, 2025)*
   - Treasurer – Walt Crosmer
   - Secretary – Dede Crosmer
   - Nominations from the floor – none

   Motion made (Dave Dickmander) to close nominations and **seconded** (Elmo Watson)
   Motion approved
   Motion made (Chris Wethman) to approve the slate of officers and **seconded** (Pastor Brooks)
   Discussion – none
   Motion approved

9. **Recommendation to Voters from Grace Advisory Board**

The Resource Board and Grace Advisory Board recommend that the lower parking lot be repaved and the upper parking lot (behind Grace House) be resealed. The Resource Board received three quotes and have chosen Raleigh Paving.

Discussion:

- How would lines be in the parking lot for cars, there is concern for how tight the spaces are.
  - This would be at our discretion.
- Will the drainage issue in the lower parking lot be addressed.
  - Yes
- Concern over the roots that are pushing the lot up.
  - It is believed that if those roots were damaged, it wouldn't affect the tree.
- How long would this take?
  - It is felt that this could be one within a week. All church members and neighbors that border the lower parking lot would be given ample notice before the project starts.
- Concern over the shared driveway going down to the lower parking lot
  - Driveway is not our property. Permits will be pulled by Raleigh Paving Company and the sidewalk with also be patched.
- Cost for project is $57,550
  - Sources of Funding:
    - Donation (Individual): $7500
    - Go & Make: $18,050
    - Saints of Grace: $32,000
      - Money in the Saints of Grace Fund was put in a CD 6 months ago in anticipation of this. There will still be approximately, $14,000 left.
- Is there a contingency plan in case something more comes up.
  - Yes, money could be taken out of the Go & Make Campaign

The Resource Board has been tirelessly working on this for over a year. Raleigh Paving's quote was given in October 2024 and they will honor this quote as long as the price of materials is unchanged.

This recommendation is put forward to the Voters as this is not in our regular budget.

President calls for a vote to move forward with this project – **All approved**.

10. **Announcements, Other Business, Open Discussion**

a. Staffing Update: Kim Romigh will hit her 90 days tomorrow with Grace. Her office hours are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 8:30am-1:30pm; Tuesday 1:30-6pm. She is doing a fabulous job and is very efficient. Pastor shared that if we have a new DCO on board this year, Kim will be able to handle any additional work.

b. DCOCC update
    i. Call committee has continued to work diligently. Pastor Brooks thanked all that have been involved, Gail Glifort, Kent Silvernail, Joe Wethman and John Kolba. Marie Snyder and Jacob Robinson have also worked on the committee previously.
    ii. Interviews have been conducted with the Call Committee and the Grace Advisory Board. After discussion, the Call Committee and GAB have invited Anna Voelker and her husband Noah to visit the Durham area. They will be here the evening of Thursday, May 29 – Sunday, June 1. There will be time to visit with her before church during the fellowship time and after the service.
c. Sabbatical – dates and coverage for Pastor Brooks' sabbatical:
    i. June 9 – July 4th weekend
        1. Sunday June 15: Pastor Greg Williams
        2. Sunday, June 22 & June 29: Pastor Joe Ostafinski
        3. Pastoral Emergencies will be covered by the Home Centered PALS Group (Barb Tippin, Joe Wethman, Scott Gesell, Judy Barnes, Tom McGill and Joyce Rea)
        4. Deaths or other serious emergencies will be covered by Pastors Scott Lohman (Advent) and Mike Merker (Jordan)
    ii. August 13 – Labor Day Weekend
        1. 2 out of 3 will be covered by Pastor Steve Saxe
        2. Pastor Brooks is looking for coverage still for one of the Sundays
        3. Pastoral Emergencies will be covered by the Home Centered PALS Group
        4. Deaths or other serious emergencies will be covered by Pastors Scott Lohman (Advent) and Mike Merker (Jordan)
d. DL Ambassador
    i. We received a MALIM Grant to help with the Duke Lutheran Center. Grant is now done, so there is no need for Duke Lutheran Ambassadors (Barbara & Kent Silvernail). John Kolba, Dan Heuser and Geoff Heintzelman continue to serve on the Duke Lutheran Committee.
e. Trustee appointment
    i. President has appointed the following members to serve on the Special Funds Committee:
        1. Dave Pittman (term ends at the end of 2025)
        2. Walt Crosmer (term ends at the end of 2026)
        3. Kent Silvernail (term ends at the end of 2027)
        4. Dede Crosmer (GAB member serving a 2-year term, ends at the end of 2026)

ii. There will be an open position at the end of this year. If you are interested in serving, please contact Bev Hudgins.

f. Open Discussion:
   i. Will the DCO do shut-in visits?
      1. The primary focus will be to be out in the community and facilitating us to be out in the community.

11. **Adjournment**

Motion made (Janet Dickmander) to adjourn the meeting and **seconded** (Pastor Brooks) at 12:45pm
Discussion – none
Motion approved

12. **Closing Prayer** – read in unison

Respectfully submitted,
Dede Crosmer, Secretary

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Minutes of Special Voters' Meeting
Sunday, June 8, 2025, 11:30 AM
Call Service: For the purpose of discerning God's will
regarding Deaconess Anna Voelker as Director of Christian Outreach

- **Hymn "With the Lord Begin Your Task"** LSB 869, verse 1
- **Opening Prayer**
- **The Old Testament Lesson**: Proverbs 2:1-8
- **Prayer for the Call Committee**
- **Hymn "Christ is our Cornerstone"** LSB 912, verse 1
- **The Epistle Lesson**: Philippians 1:3-6, 9-11
- **Prayer for the Candidate**
- **Hymn "O God of Light"** LSB 836, verse 1 & 4
- **The Gospel Lesson**: John 16:13-15
- **Prayer for the Congregation and its Mission**
- **Hymn "O Holy Spirit, Enter In"** LSB 913, verse 1
- **The Presentation of the Candidate**
- **Explanation of the Process for a First Call**
- **Conversation for Mutual Discernment**
    - Reading and Approval of Proxies
        - Walt Crosmer & Bev Hudgins have given their proxy to Dede Crosmer
        - Jean Pochert & Joyce Rea have given their proxy to Kathy Pittman
        - New voters announced: Dan Heuser and Molly Brooks
        - **Motion made** (Donna Gesell) to accept proxies and new voters
        - **Seconded** (Kathy Peterson)
        - **Discussion** – none
        - **Motion approved and quorum has been reached**
- **Silence for Meditation**
- **The Vote**
- **Hymn "With the Lord Begin Your Task**" LSB 869, verse 5
- **Announcement of the Result**
    - The Congregation of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of Durham, NC has voted unanimously yes, they believe that God is leading them to call Deaconess Anna Voelker to serve as our Director of Christian Outreach.
- **The Lord's Prayer**
- **Hymn "Go, My Children, With my Blessing"** LSB 922 Verse 4

Respectfully submitted,
Dede Crosmer, Grace Advisory Board Secretary

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
Statistical Report – May 19, 2025 through October 30, 2025

	Baptized	Confirmed
As of May 19, 2025	191	172
Deaths	-	-
Whereabouts Unknown	-	-
Transfer to LCMS	-	-
Self Exclusion	-1	-
Released to Other Churches	-	-
Baptism	2	2
Members Received by Transfer from LCMS Church	2	2
Members Received via New Member Instruction (Affirmation)		
Communicant Members Received (Confirmation)	-	-
Total Membership as of October 30, 2025	194	176
DEATHS:		
BAPTISMS:	Kate Grabowski (7/20/25)	
	Adam Casteel (8/3/25)	
MEMBERS RECEIVED (TRANSFER):	Anna Voelker (9-4-25) St. John Lutheran Church, Seymour, IN	
	Noah Voelker (9-4-25) St. John Lutheran Church, Seymour, IN	
SELF EXCLUSION:	Pam Wilson	
WEDDINGS:		

Pastor's Annual Report

Fall 2025

Paul sent for the disciples and, after encouraging them, said goodbye and set out for Macedonia. [2] *He traveled through that area, speaking many words of encouragement to the people, and finally arrived in Greece,* [3] *where he stayed three months.* –Acts 20:1-3

The year 2025 was the year for journey, adventure and discovery!

I began the year deep in plans: plans for Lent/Easter; plans for rekindling the search for a Director of Christian Outreach (DCO); plans to replace our awesome Parish Administrator, Barb Tippen; plans for sabbatical. We may plan, but God provides, and so we launched into the year with the breath of the Holy Spirit in our sails.

Early in the year we interviewed several candidates for office roles and settled on two part-time persons as the best way forward after Barb's retirement. After some trial and error (all journeys include discoveries), we shifted to a single position. Kim Romigh stepped into the role and has excelled! I am grateful for her partnership in ministry and give God thanks for her many gifts and am glad that we were able to make her position full-time earlier this fall.

Our theme for Lent this year was "My Soul is Dry." We examined the six penitential psalms that speak to us even today of our need for God as a dry land needs refreshing rain. Easter was a joyful time, and our first celebration of a Sunrise Vigil Service was well attended. I am glad to add this service to our traditions!

We said a heartfelt thank you to two members of our Call Committee that stepped away from that work to turn their attention to other important matters and welcomed two new participants. The committee refocused and began contacting and interviewing candidates through the winter and spring.

Also, during the spring we secured supply pastors for the summer, and I looked forward to the time the congregation had set aside for me for renewal and new growth.

The month of May found me on the road as I attended our Southeast District Convention in Richmond, VA. The Convention Theme was "Immeasurable Hope." District President William Harmon was reelected to a three-year term, and a proposed resolution regarding senior adult ministries, authored by our own Chris Wethman, was adopted by unanimous vote! May was also the month where the Call Committee, led by the Holy Spirit, identified Deaconess Anna Voelker as our primary candidate for our DCO position. With all hands on deck, we moved through the process and extended a call to Anna on June 8th! Whew!

The next day, (June 9) I began the first part of my planned sabbatical. My family and I traveled to Utah where the three of us explored the "Mighty 5" national parks: Zion, Bryce Canyon, Canyonlands, Arches, and Capitol Reef. We also made it to Mesa Verde National Park in Colorado and Death Valley National Park in California. Our trip was three weeks of renewal and memory creation for my family that we will always treasure!

I returned after the July 4th holiday and, with all the congregation, welcomed Anna and her husband Noah to life with us at Grace. The month of July was used to get Anna oriented to her new situation, reset several items so that August would go smoothly, and prepare for the second half of the sabbatical. I used August to participate in a university-style seminar on how emerging technologies such as AI will affect the Church in the future. The second part of the month was an opportunity for Sharon and me to celebrate our 25th anniversary with a visit to the place of our wedding—Newport Beach, California. Thank you to all of your well-wishes!

The arrival of fall meant more travel: I attended a continuing education event at Concordia-St. Louis, as well as the District's Fall Church Worker Retreat. Dan Heuser and I were invited to share with brothers and sisters of our district how Grace is trying to bless our community through the Farmer's Market. Another fall event means travel next year: the Triangle Circuit (the twelve congregations of which Grace is a part) elected me to be the circuit's pastoral representative to next summer's LCMS National Convention.

Lastly, as autumn ends and we look to Advent, I am excited about our 10 by 10 stewardship emphasis as we build foundations for generosity.

Other highlights of the year include:

- ✝ Celebrating several adult baptisms—to God be the glory!
- ✝ Launching our Discipleship Pathway process
- ✝ Seeing new PALS groups and Study groups form
- ✝ Conducting a revamped New Member process in October

I want to end this report on journeying and discovery by saying "thank you" to the staff that serves Grace so wonderfully: Parish Administrator Kim Romigh, Church Musician Erin Hodge, and Director of Christian Outreach Deaconess Anna Voelker. I also offer grateful thanks to the members of the Grace Advisory Board who worked so tirelessly this year particularly during my time away. Finally, I say to you, my brothers and sisters, thank you for allowing me the privilege of being your pastor, and I look forward to journeying with you for many years to come as we follow our Lord Jesus into adventure!

In Christ,

Pr. Dave Brooks

Director of Christian Outreach Report

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

Beginning in July, Grace called me to serve as the Director of Christian Outreach with my commissioning and installation taking place on September 14th. As Christians, our desire is to share the love of Christ with all people. Serving as the DCO, I am seeking ways to help Grace implement plans and programs to share this Good News. While I have only been here a few months, the Spirit is at work as Grace continues to grow and strive to "be the Church wherever we are."

I thank God for each of you. The members of Grace have been incredibly kind, welcoming, and encouraging as I have stepped into the role of DCO. Seeing the hospitality offered to me, I am confident that Grace can show that hospitality to others - to visitors on Sunday, to people involved in various ministries, and to strangers on the street. The Spirit works through this kindness and generosity in immeasurable ways.

In John 16, Jesus says, "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

We have peace in Christ. We know this incredible message of salvation in Christ. How are we, as a church, building one another up through this message? How are we taking this message beyond the walls of Grace? These are the questions that shape what I do as I oversee outreach.

Much of July and August was spent orienting myself to the area, getting to know members of Grace, attending meetings and events that were already in place, and connecting with Grace's partner ministries. This is a foundational step to building relationships and beginning outreach. In September and October we celebrated the farmers market volunteers and vendors with a cook out and organized a food collection for Early Head Start. The first "Shared Servanthood" newsletter also went out to members - a monthly snapshot of how God is at work through Grace. Initial steps have been taken in forming a Grace House task force and to send a short-term team to serve alongside missionaries in Puerto Rico. All of these things are joyous opportunities to share Christ's love!

Servant Board

In September the Grace Advisory Board asked that I would temporarily serve as the leader of the Servant Board. Since then I have been planning ways to better support and encourage our PALS group leaders along with seeking opportunities for more PALS groups. Since then a new Young Adults PALS group has begun and I pray more will form throughout 2026. As we move out into the community to serve our neighbors and share

the Gospel it will be invaluable to have these small group ministries in place. I ask that you please prayerfully consider serving on this board.

Moving into this next year there is so much joy and anticipation for what God will do next. As we look to 2026 I am excited for more opportunities to join in fellowship as believers and to share the Gospel with others! I encourage us all to pray that the Lord would open our hearts and minds to reaching beyond the walls of Grace to serve God.

I am so grateful to be a servant of Christ alongside each of you, brothers and sisters.

God's Blessings,

Deac. Anna Voelker

A Note of Encouragement as We Look Ahead to 2026

11/16/2025

Dear Church Family,

As we prepare for our upcoming voter's meeting and the approval of the 2026 budget, I want to take a moment to celebrate what God is doing among us.

Over the past few years, we've been on a journey — moving from being consumers of the Gospel to becoming the church **that proclaims the Gospel wherever we are**. What a blessing it has been to see this transformation taking root in our life together!

Our pastor, staff, and leaders have shown incredible commitment to this shift in our DNA. They are growing in love for God and for one another, leading by example as we all learn to live missionally — not just within our walls, but in our homes, workplaces, and neighborhoods.

We've seen God at work through both our long-standing ministries and the new ones taking shape — including the leadership of our Deaconess and Director of Christian Outreach. Each step forward reminds us that we are part of something bigger: God's mission to bring Good News to the world.

As you prayerfully consider your part in our 2026 budget, I encourage you to think not only about your financial giving, but also about how you might stretch in your missional living — sharing Christ's love wherever He places you.

Thank you for being part of this growing, Gospel-centered community. Let's continue to walk together, trusting that God will use us in to do immeasurable more than we can even think or imagine — with Good News!

In Christ,
Beverly Hudgins
Congregation President

Discipleship Board - Report to Voters' Assembly – Grace Lutheran Church
November 2025

Purpose:

Discipleship Board – *This Ministry Board Is committed to:*

- ***Making disciples*** *by teaching men and women how to Walk the Way of GRACE. This teaching responsibility includes core classes intended to help learners understand the congregation's vision and mission and to grow as participants in the congregation's shared life, such as the Discover series;*
- ***Encouraging servant ministry*** *by training persons in the key habits of discipleship: prayer, study of the Scriptures, generous living and sharing community through confession and forgiveness;*
- ***Facilitating the movement*** *of men and women from visitor to committed discipleship to Jesus Christ through encouragement, engagement, and instruction;*
- ***Creating and supporting*** *neighborhoods or subgroups for specific ministry functions such as the care of baptized children, confirmation, and other youth ministries.* ***Section 8.1 of Grace's Bylaws***

The Discipleship Board is pleased to share the following ~

- Held a workshop to create a plan that trains individuals in the key habits of discipleship. Results:
  - Definition of Discipleship: **A disciple is one who knows Christ, is growing in Christ, serving Christ and Sharing Christ.**
  - Charted a Discipleship Journey with these milestones along the way. Resources for each milestone shared (or to be shared) with the Congregation on:
    - September 21, 2025 - Seeking Christ
    - October 26, 2025 - Knowing Christ
    - **January 11, 2026 -** Growing in Christ
    - **February 15, 2026 -** Serving Christ
    - **March 15, 2026 -** Sharing Christ
- **Wednesdays at One** events (lunch and speaker) held on the following dates:
  - May 2025 - "Joy" presented by Beatrice Parker
  - October 2025 – Q&A session on Computer Use. Presenters: Dan and Becky Thomas
  - November 2025 – **GriefShare: Surviving the Holidays**, a two-hour event offering practical tools for coping with loss during the holiday season. Facilitator: Bev Hudgins
  - Planning in progress for 2026 includes possible presentation by John Denninger, dedicated gift planning counselor of the LCMS Foundation.
- To better serve visitors to Grace and facilitate their movement to committed discipleship to Jesus Christ, a Welcome Center was placed in the Narthex. Thanks to Joe Wethman and Kent Silvernail for assembling it.
- I would like to express my deep appreciation to **Barbara Silvernail** and **Laura Michael** for their faithful and dedicated service on the Discipleship Board. Both have consistently given of their time, energy, and wisdom to support the ongoing work of discipleship within our congregation. Their willingness to engage fully–attending meetings, contributing ideas, and following through on action items–stands as a strong example of servant leadership. They have chosen to participate wholeheartedly in the ministry and mission of making disciples.

Submitted by: Chris Wethman

"Going with Good News: teaching, serving and sharing Christ with our neighbors."

2025 Grace Resource Board, Annual Report (updated to include Grace House report)

MAJOR Updates, upgrades and uplifts:

>Hire of a full-time Ministry Assistant, Kim Romigh. Thank you Chris Wethman for leading the hiring team.
>Finance Committee Creation. Drew Young, Dave Pittman, Dave Dickmander and Treasurer Walt Crosmer. "Establishes the budget based on revenue projections and allocates the financial resources of the Congregation to support and strengthen the mission and ministry of the Congregation." Lauren Michael agreed to be Financial Secretary.
>Update phones/copier. Better fit and value. Thank you Chris, Donna Gesell and Dan Thomas.
>Grace House new back porch. Front porch repaired and painted. Dede and Walt Crosmer, and Kathy.
>All church offices repainted and uplifted. Pastor's office MAJOR renovation. Dede (project manager) Walt, Joe Wethman, Karen Kreymborg, Mike Hunike, Sally Sump, Donna and Scott Gesell, Drew Young, Kent Silvernail, and Kathy all played important roles in this project.
>Welcome Center and Info Bulletin Board. Barbara Silvernail and Chris had a vision and delivered a new way to learn about Discipleship at Grace.
>Quilters and Farmers Market benefitted from MAJOR decluttering and sorting within the various rooms, nooks and crannies. The eating area in the kitchen now welcomes us with round tables: easier for group meals and meetings. Kitchen tidied and transformed into a wonderful working area. Farmers Market benefits from new table/chair trolley. Duke Lutherans now using the kitchen piano; once again making a joyful noise!
>Courtyard upgrade keeps waste bins tidy and limits access under ramps. Thank you Walt!
>Parking lot repaving…….end of October completion date. Fingers crossed. Mike and Drew, bravo!
>Employee Handbook: working on additional revisions. Another Chris project-THANK YOU!!
>New Outdoor Signage: corner and parking lot. Delivery soon. Chris, Scott and Drew slugged through the Durham City sign ordinances submission process. We think you're going to like the new look!
Grace House/Duke Host Homes Report After a significant amount of time, the Grace House upstairs apartment has been up and running. There have been 3 families that have stayed there for a period of time between June and October. Currently the upstairs use is on hold due to work on the front porch and redoing the parking lot.
Deaconess Anna is forming a Grace House Task Force to brainstorm ideas on the use of Grace House. After years of service as Administrators of Grace House, Dede Crosmer & Donna Gesell will be stepping down as the administrators at the end of 2026. Please prayerfully consider if you would like to step into this role in 2026 as the liaisons for the Duke Host Homes.

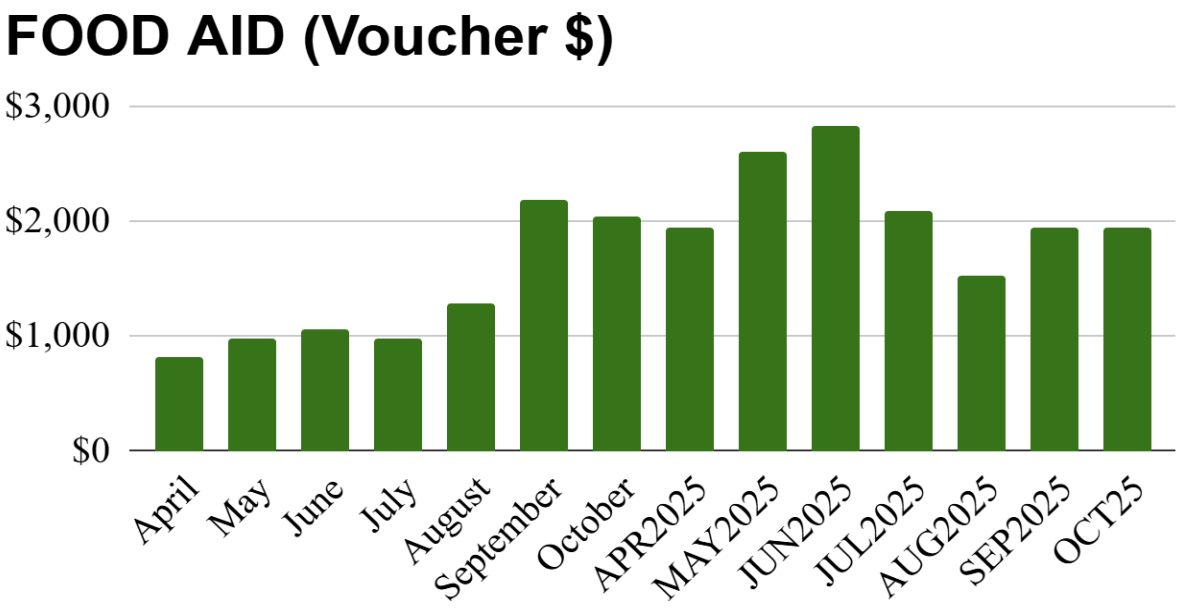
>What's in store for 2026? Outdoor landscaping: parking lot island, areas between sanctuary and Grace House, area next to sidewalk along Fellowship Hall, lighting in courtyard, and large expense payment plan (Dave Dickmander has volunteered to organize). Support the Ministry of the Grace House. We need to plan summer landscaping maintenance: mowing, edging, and weeding.

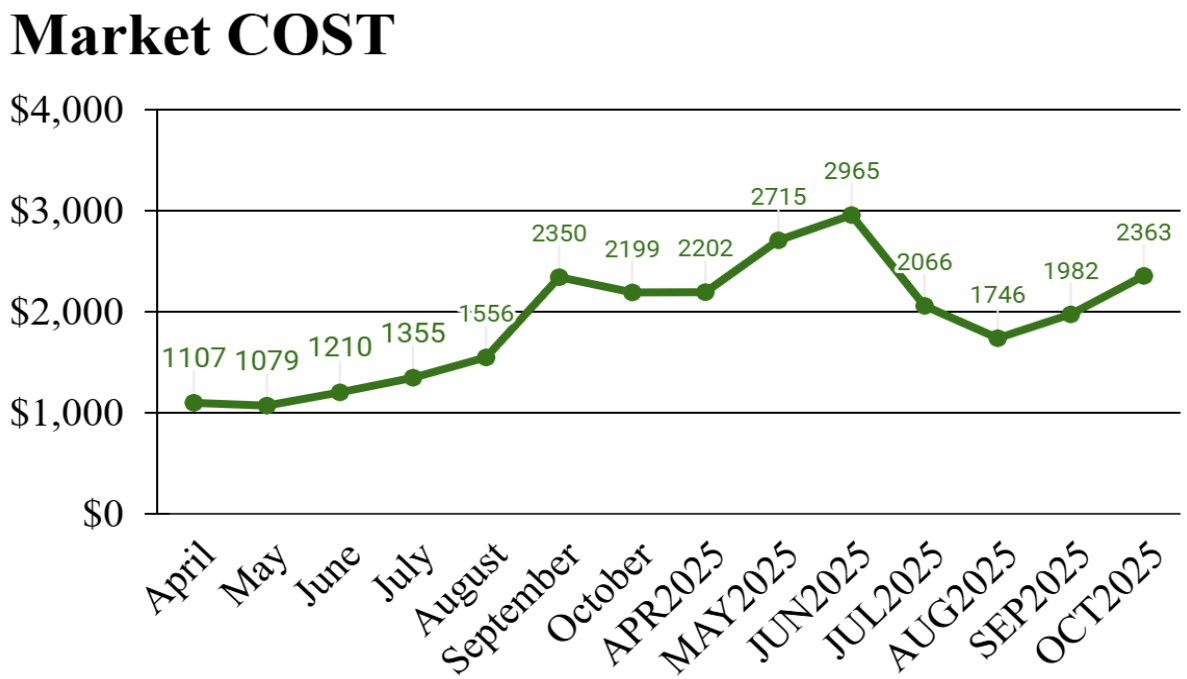
I would like to thank the many members of the congregation who helped the Resource Board upgrade, update, and uplift so many spaces in the Church and GH. Thank you to the Congregation who funded most of our projects through the Go and Make Campaign. (final report will be out in Jan 2026).
Finally, thank you for your prayers as we go with Good News, teaching, serving, and sharing Christ with our neighbors.

Prayerfully submitted, Kathy Peterson, Resource Board Chair

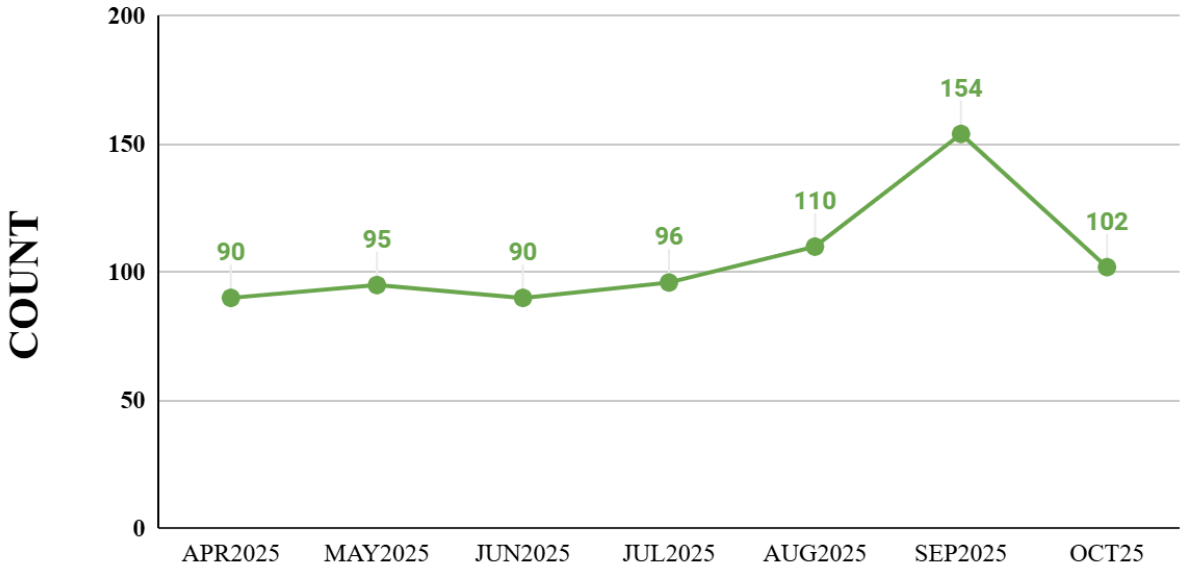
October 2025 Market Analysis

<u>FOCAL POINTS:</u> With the near-completion of the market's second year, some trends may be emerging. Walltown/St. John's voucher utilization is 80+%. Likely this is as high as it will ever be going forward (nothing is ever 100%). A typical market attracts about 100 people. Guaranteed income is the main source of variability in market cost.

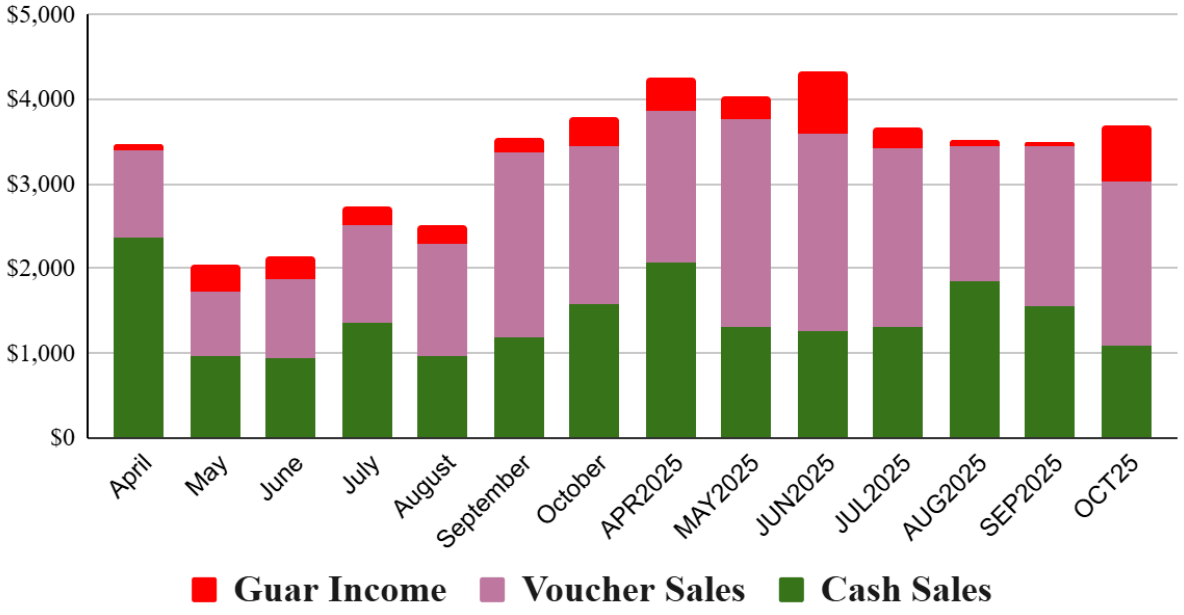




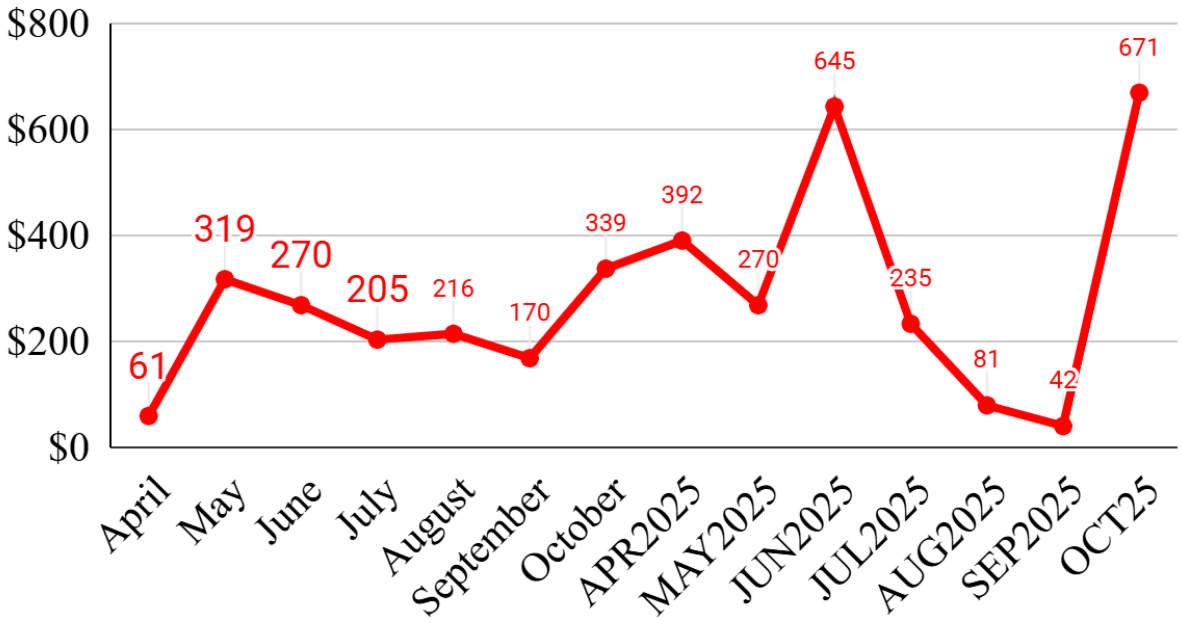
FOOT TRAFFIC



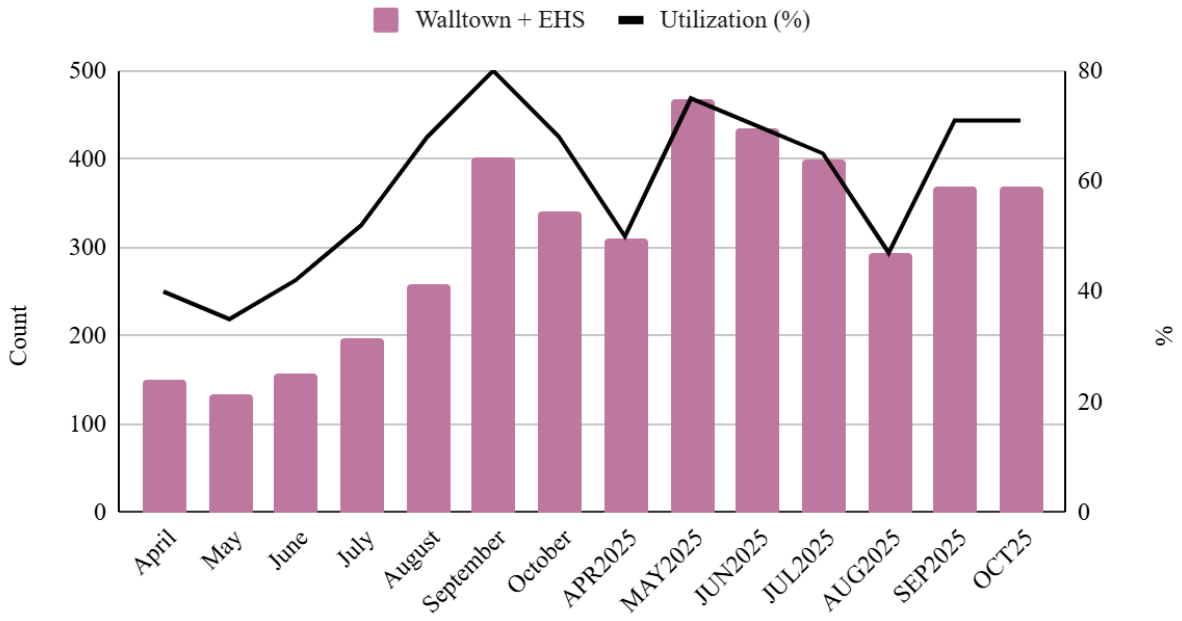
Farmers' Income



Guaranteed Income COST



VOUCHERS Received



COMMENT: October continued the wide disparity between Walltown/St. John's (85%) and Early Head Start (27%) in voucher utilization that does not get captured well in this version of the graph.

10/21/2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The Finance Committee (FC) was tasked with reviewing the 2026 Budget Requests as well as the Staffing Expense and make a recommendation to the Resource Board and the Grace Advisory Board (GAB) for final approval prior to issuing for the Voters' Assembly final vote in November 2025.

The methodology employed by the FC was a combination of Balanced Budget and Faith Based approaches. Historically, the budget has increased an average of 8.3% per year from 2023 – 2025 while giving has increased an average of 3% per year. The Lord has been good to us and we believe He will continue to provide what is required to support our ministry needs. After much debate, deliberation, and prayerful consideration, GAB has approved the 2026 proposed budget of $433,795 – an increase of 10.8% from 2025 (with the previously approved DCO offsets taken into account).

Some of the highlights (or changes to requests) as approved by GAB are as follows:

- A decrease of $1550 to payroll processing fees by allowing Concordia Plan Services to manage the administration of payroll and taxes. This is a free service to congregations with less than 20 full-time employees.
- $0 to support an external financial audit (if deemed necessary).
- Staffing – a salary increase of 2.5% for the Parish Administrator (PA). All full-time employees (Pastor, DCO, PA) 403b match will increase from $500 to $1,000 annually. A 1X lump sum bonus of $2,500 (approximately 2.6%) will be paid to Pastor in lieu of any salary increase.
- Duke Lutherans support reduced to $500 along with continued use of the church space.
- An increase to our annual support of the Southeast District missions by 12.5% to $18,000 - now will be 4.1% of our total budget.
- Farmers Market had a 2025 budget of $15,500 none of which was required as funds from grants and other donations more than covered all needs. In light of this and with the current remaining balance, the budget support has been reduced to $8,000 along with continued use of the church parking lot / church spaces. Farmers Market will review current vendor/client practices and make necessary changes. The Farmers Market will continue with requests for grants, sponsorships, and donations to aid in the ongoing/future cost needs.

God's Blessings,

Walt Crosmer, Treasurer, Finance Committee Lead

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH - FUNDING THE MINISTRY FOR 2026

OPERATIONAL BUDGET	Item		Funding	% of Budget
	Administration	$	38,587.76	8.90%
	Staff Expense	$	290,294.20	66.92%
	Utilities	$	27,654.20	6.37%
	Maintenance	$	22,272.80	5.13%
Total		**$**	**378,808.96**	**87.32%**

MISSIONS EXPENSE	Item		Funding	% of Budget
	Grow with Jesus	$	11,150.00	2.57%
	Rejoice in God	$	6,350.00	1.46%
	Answer with Hope	$	850.00	0.20%
	Care for Neighbors	$	4,887.00	1.13%
	Embrace Community	$	31,750.00	7.32%
Total		**$**	**54,987.00**	**12.68%**

2026 BUDGET GRAND TOTAL			
	$	**433,795.96**	

Item	2025 Budget	9 mo. Expenses	2026 Budget
OPERATIONAL SPENDING PLAN			
Administration			
Archives	$ 100.00	$ -	$ -
Brotherhood Fire Insurance	$ 14,600.00	$ 11,858.32	$ 15,500.64
Brotherhood W/C Insurance	$ 1,000.00	$ 563.25	$ 751.00
Communication	$ 1,000.00	$ 555.54	$ 1,000.00
Computer Upgrade	$ 1,000.00	$ 234.32	$ 500.00
Advisory Leadership	$ 1,800.00	$ 747.04	$ 1,000.00
Equipment	$ 9,000.00	$ 7,227.28	$ 11,898.12
Misc. Admin Expense	$ 1,500.00	$ 2,250.31	$ 1,000.00
Office Supplies	$ 1,850.00	$ 1,081.34	$ 1,850.00
Postage Admin.	$ 1,150.00	$ 590.45	$ 1,000.00
Security System	$ 908.00	$ 1,563.35	$ 1,603.00

Item	2025 Budget	9 mo. Expenses	2026 Budget	
Service Fee/Paychex/Vanco	$ 2,900.00	$ 1,808.58	$ 1,110.00	
Software Support	$ 1,375.00	$ 1,657.85	$ 1,375.00	
Independent Policy Audit	$ -	$ -	$ -	
GH Mortgage Expense	$ -	$ -	$ -	
Total Administration Expenses	**$ 38,183.00**	**$ 30,137.63**	**$ 38,587.76**	
Staff				
Salaries	$ 189,488.00	$ 120,894.84	$ 186,165.18	
Organist Cont. Ed	$ 2,400.00	$ 715.00	$ 1,600.00	
Housing (Pastor / DCO)	$ 21,000.00	$ 20,730.18	$ 44,904.84	*
Employer Fed Tax	$ 11,712.00	$ 4,455.10	$ 11,464.32	
Health Insurance	$ 45,883.00	$ 23,386.48	$ 58,701.72	
Retirement	$ 13,781.00	$ 7,471.72	$ 23,176.98	
Disability	$ 3,423.00	$ 1,593.52	$ 2,262.83	
DCO NonBudget	$ (43,089.00)	$ -	$ (37,981.67)	**
Total Staff Expenses	**$ 244,598.00**	**$ 179,246.84**	**$ 290,294.20**	
Utilities				
Electricity	$ 13,500.00	$ 9,709.12	$ 13,500.00	
Gas	$ 3,600.00	$ 2,803.76	$ 5,200.00	
Internet	$ 3,275.00	$ 2,455.65	$ 3,274.20	
Phone	$ 3,700.00	$ 3,843.10	$ 1,980.00	
Water/Sewer	$ 3,500.00	$ 2,740.85	$ 3,700.00	
Total Utilities Expenses	**$ 27,575.00**	**$ 21,552.48**	**$ 27,654.20**	
Maintenance Expense				
Church Maintenance Expense	$ 12,000.00	$ 6,407.02	$ 10,000.00	
GH Maintenance Expense	$ 1,000.00	$ 233.33	$ 1,000.00	
Exterminator	$ 792.00	$ 453.00	$ 780.00	
AC Contract	$ -	$ -	$ -	
Cleaning Service	$ 8,450.00	$ 6,336.00	$ 9,292.80	
Supplies Building	$ 850.00	$ 435.37	$ 800.00	
Supplies Kitchen	$ 600.00	$ 160.52	$ 400.00	

Item	2025 Budget	9 mo. Expenses	2026 Budget
Total Maintenance Expense	**$ 23,692.00**	**$ 14,025.24**	**$ 22,272.80**
TOTAL OPERATIONAL SPENDING PLAN	**$ 334,048.00**	**$ 244,962.19**	**$ 378,808.96**

MISSION SPENDING PLAN			
Grow with Jesus			
Educational Materials	$ 1,200.00	$ 278.36	$ 1,200.00
Confirmation	$ -	$ -	$ -
Portals of Prayer	$ 412.00	$ 337.64	$ 700.00
Library (Resource Center)	$ 200.00	$ -	$ -
Outside Speaker	$ 750.00	$ -	$ -
Teen Activities	$ 250.00	$ -	$ -
DCO Continuing Ed	$ -	$ -	$ 500.00
DCO Books	$ -	$ -	$ 150.00
DCO Prof. Expenses	$ -	$ -	$ 250.00
DCO Conferences	$ -	$ -	$ 1,000.00
Pastor Continuing Ed	$ 1,000.00	$ 662.79	$ 1,500.00
Pastor Books	$ 100.00	$ 30.56	$ 100.00
Pastor Prof. Expenses	$ 500.00	$ 709.90	$ 500.00
Pastor Conferences	$ 1,250.00	$ 657.96	$ 1,500.00
PALS Group Support	$ 6,300.00	$ 264.07	$ 3,500.00
Stewardship	$ 250.00	$ -	$ 250.00
Total Grow with Jesus	**$ 12,212.00**	**$ 2,941.28**	**$ 11,150.00**
Rejoice in God			
Altar Guild	$ 1,100.00	$ 1,851.56	$ 400.00
Copyright License	$ 800.00	$ 581.44	$ 800.00
General Worship	$ 200.00	$ 169.74	$ 250.00
Guest Musicians	$ 2,000.00	$ 1,727.38	$ 2,800.00
Music	$ 200.00	$ 153.50	$ 250.00
Tuning/Repair	$ 1,400.00	$ 352.13	$ 750.00
Worship Resources	$ 400.00	$ 21.49	$ 300.00
Supply Pastor	$ 600.00	$ 900.00	$ 600.00
Equipment/Livestream	$ -	$ -	$ -

Item	2025 Budget	9 mo. Expenses	2026 Budget
Flowers/Plants	$ 200.00	$ 395.30	$ 200.00
Total Rejoice in God	**$ 6,900.00**	**$ 6,152.54**	**$ 6,350.00**
Answer with Hope			
Marketing	$ -	$ -	$ 250.00
T-Shirts	$ -	$ -	$ -
Website	$ -	$ -	$ 100.00
Visitor Welcome	$ -	$ -	$ 500.00
GLC App	$ -	$ -	$ -
Total Answer with Hope	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ 850.00**
Care for Neighbors			
Stephens Ministry Books	$ 275.00	$ 174.20	$ 275.00
Stephen Ministry Training	$ -	$ -	$ 1,987.00
Care of Baptized Children	$ 200.00	$ -	$ -
Lay Continuing Ed	$ -	$ 29.97	$ 500.00
Grief Dues	$ 500.00	$ 500.00	$ 500.00
Grief Books/Postage	$ 350.00	$ -	$ 275.00
Compassion-Christ/Easter	$ 300.00	$ -	$ -
Helene Expense	$ -	$ -	$ -
Prayer Shawl Postage	$ 100.00	$ -	$ 100.00
Duke Lutherans	$ 2,300.00	$ -	$ 500.00
LWML	$ 450.00	$ 385.68	$ 500.00
Home-Centered PALS	$ 250.00	$ -	$ 250.00
New Ministries	$ -	$ 160.40	$ -
Total Care for Neighbors	**$ 4,725.00**	**$ 1,250.25**	**$ 4,887.00**
Embrace Community			
SED	$ 16,000.00	$ 12,000.00	$ 18,000.00
Fellowship Food	$ 1,100.00	$ 788.67	$ 1,500.00
Farmers Market	$ 15,500.00	$ -	$ 8,000.00
Fellowship Misc	$ 1,000.00	$ 30.52	$ 4,250.00
Total Embrace Community	**$ 33,600.00**	**$ 12,819.19**	**$ 31,750.00**

Item	2025 Budget	9 mo. Expenses	2026 Budget
TOTAL MISSION SPENDING PLAN	$ 57,437.00	$ 23,163.26	$ 54,987.00

2025 Income Received as % of 2025 Budget
75.53%

Proposed 2026 Budget Increase
10.8%

RESTRICTED ACCOUNTS	Current Balances (As of 09/30/2025)	
Benevolence	$	1,531.36
DCO NonBudget	$	17,824.71
DCO NonBudget Term Notes	$	60,414.24
Embrace Grace	$	415.45
Farmer's Market	$	3,361.00
Go and Make	$	84,076.20
Grace House	$	1,307.87
MALIM Grant	$	-
Maita Puerto Rico Mission	$	80.00
Mitchell Endowment	$	24,493.53
Pastor Sabbatical	$	3,037.50
Saints of Grace	$	50,929.98
Shephard's Tent	$	39,866.72
Shephard's Tent Parking Lot	$	7,700.00
Walltown Building Project	$	10,000.00
Walltown Food Bank	$	719.86
TOTAL RESTRICTED ACCOUNTS	**$**	**305,758.42**
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED ACCOUNTS	**$**	**98,626.71**
TOTAL ALL ACCOUNTS	**$**	**404,385.13**

* - Housing Allowance is up to a maximum percentage of gross annual compensation agreed by Voters' Assembly

** - DCO Offset from restricted accounts (Go & Make and Mitchell Endowment) as per call documents