

EDISON PARK LUTHERAN CHURCH

Annual Report 2025



98 Years

Our Mission:

To be a people living, loving and serving as Jesus did...
so that all may know Him.

Table of Contents

Agenda for the 2026 Congregational Annual Meeting, including Council Slate.....	3
Minutes from the 2025 Congregational Annual Meeting.....	4
Staff Directory.....	6
<u>STAFF REPORTS</u>	
Carole Edwards, Deacon and Business Administrator.....	6
Kevin Zehme , Director of Worship and Music	8
Toby Burkum, Lead AV Tech.....	9
<u>MINISTRY REPORTS</u>	
Growth Team.....	10
Mission Quilt Makers.....	10
The Night Ministry Holiday Backpacks	11
Veteran’s Task Force.....	11
Sunshine Circle Card Ministry.....	11
Property Committee.....	12
<u>CONGREGATION REPORTS</u>	
Jonathan Jedd, President of the Church Council.....	14
John Cherry, Treasurer of the Church Council.....	15
Foundation Report.....	16
EPLC 2025 Proposed Ministry Plan/Financial Budget.....	17
Benevolence from EPLC 2025.....	18
EPLC Membership Statistics 2025.....	19

Agenda for the 2026 Annual Meeting for the Congregation

February 1st – 10:00 am

- Call to Order
- Opening Prayer
- Approval of Minutes
 - 2025 Annual Meeting
- Reports
 - Deacon and Business Administrator
 - President of the Congregation
 - Director of Worship and Music
 - Treasurer
- Approval of the Budget for 2026
- Old Business
 - Property Report
- New Business
 - 100th Anniversary Celebration
- 2026 Council Slate
 - Kathie Houck – 1st term ends Jan 2027
 - Lorene Laubach – 1st term ends Jan 2027
 - Rick Brown - 1st term ends Jan 2028
 - Cathy Johnson - 2nd term ends Jan 2029
 - Bob Hotton - 1st term ends Jan 2029
 - Carolyn Nasheim - 1st term ends Jan 2029
 - Katherine Rhame - 1st term ends Jan 2029
 - John Romano - 1st term ends Jan 2029
 - Molly Staron - 1st term ends Jan 2029
- Approve actions of the 2025 Congregation Council
- Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Minutes from the 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, February 2, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

Call to Order/Opening Prayer

The meeting was called to order by President Jonathan Jedd at 10:08 a.m. A count of attendees determined that enough members were in attendance to constitute a quorum. Pastor Joe Schultz led us in prayer.

Approval of 2024 Minutes

A motion was made by Julio Hernandez and seconded by Wendy Seibel to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting as presented. Motion approved.

Reports

Senior Pastor Joe Schultz

Isaiah 41 passage in printed report-*do not fear; God is with us.*

Volunteers have done amazing jobs. We have so much to be thankful for.

Attendance is up and more people are becoming active.

Deacon and Business Administrator Carole Edwards

Noted the many hats she wears as deacon and business administrator. Thankful to fulfill these roles in her home congregation. Staffing changes – Arnold Greiff began as business assistant in December, and Christine Schreiber started the new year as Parish Coordinator.

Thank-you to all for your support – staff, council, members of the congregation.

Congregation President Jonathan Jedd

What is growth? Number in attendance, dollars contributed? With staff in place we hopefully are gaining traction and can look to grow in many ways. We are seeing new people at recent events such as the car show and bingo night. Hopefully future events will see more from the community in attendance.

Director of Worship and Music Kevin Zehme

Thank-you to all worship and music volunteers. Always looking for additional people to participate. Praise group has grown from three members to ten.

Thank-you to Toby Burkum and the tech team for all your hard work and the improvements.

Children, Youth and Family Kaya Hougen

Also extended a thank-you to all the volunteers.

Last year was very busy with events throughout the year.

A/V-Tech Toby Burkum

Grateful for the opportunity to serve the congregation.

Thanks to the volunteers who assisted with producing weekly bulletins and the annual report.

Thanks to the tech team – Griffin Davis, Cole Martin, Eric Couper and Jake Couper.

Property Report – Jonathan highlighted a few of the completed projects from 2024 as listed in his report. Upcoming in 2025 will be completion of stained glass restoration and tuck-pointing. The south parking lot also needs attention. Perhaps a fundraiser can be dedicated to this project.

Treasurer - John Cherry highlighted the proposed budget for 2025 including the deficit that the EPLC Foundation will hopefully assist in covering. Two questions were received from the floor:

Is the south parking lot included in the 2025 budget? John confirmed that this project is not in the 2025 budget.

What is being done to reduce expenses? John noted that we have reduced where we can. Further cuts would impact programs. 75% of the budget is staff and building.

Approval of the Budget for 2025

A motion to approve the 2025 budget was made by Mark Dupke and seconded by Scott Koenig. Motion approved.

Old Business

Building security

Members of the Security Committee patrolled the grounds and parking lots to ensure there were no incidents.

We will be locking the exterior doors around 5:15 p.m. on Saturdays and 11:15 a.m. on Sundays. First, we will confirm/communicate/post a process such as use of the intercom to enable accessible entry when the doors are locked. The Hungarian congregation will be asked to utilize this same security procedure.

Additional questions/comments regarding finances.

Pastor Joe noted the savings of \$17K per person for the three staff members residing in EPLC residences vs. what the outlay would be with no housing.

Would we consider more fundraisers for significant projects? - Yes

Deacon Carole noted the use of qualified charitable distributions (QCD) for those seniors seeking ways to make contributions to EPLC while reducing the tax impact of their annual required minimum distributions (RMD) from retirement accounts. Contact Deacon Carole, who will connect with a subject matter expert in the congregation.

The recent bingo night brought in over \$300. We need to share results of events with the congregation on a timely basis – attendance, dollars raised, etc. Anyone can forward pictures of events to Christine Schreiber, for inclusion in the weekly email and/or monthly newsletter.

New Business

Approve Council Slate – Jonathan Jedd thanked retiring Congregation Council members Joe Bartel, Gary Berg, and Kristina Stafen for their many years of service. A motion was made by Gary Duszak and seconded by Julio Hernandez to approve the 2025 Congregation Council Slate as follows: First term ends January 2026 – Kevin Burkum (1 yr term), Kathleen Burke Melby, Cathy Johnson, Carolyn Nasheim (1 yr term); Second term ends January 2026 - John Cherry, Jonathan Jedd, Katherine Wendorf; First term ends January 2027 – Kathie Houck, Lorene Laubach; First term ends January 2028 – Rick Brown.

Motion approved.

Approve actions of 2024 Congregation Council – A motion was made Diane Wilk and seconded by Carolyn Nasheim to approve 2024 Council actions. Motion approved.

Adjournment and Closing Prayer

A motion was made at 10:59 a.m. by Mark Dupke and seconded by Gary Duszak to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved. Pastor Joe Schultz closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Berg, Congregation Council Secretary

Staff Directory

Carole Edwards, Deacon and Business Administrator

Kevin Zehme, Director of Worship and Music

Christine Schreiber, Parish Coordinator

Arnold Greiff, Accounting Assistant

Toby Burkum, Lead AV Tech

Eric Couper - AV Tech

Jake Couper - AV Tech

Jeramy Hamm - AV Tech

Cole Martin - AV Tech

Duane Smart, Custodian

Staff Reports

Carole Edwards, Deacon and Business Administrator

"to act justly, love mercy and walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8

God continues to richly bless the ministry of this congregation and I am blessed to be a part of the ministry team. My role as Deacon includes ministry, as well as serving as the Business Administrator and Human Resource Manager.

This has been a year of transition, as Pastor Joe left on May 4th to take another Call, and our Children, Youth and Family Coordinator Kaya Hougen left on June 1st to start a new job in Minnesota. In spite of being down two key full time staff positions, the Church Council, staff, and many volunteers, worked together to ensure that programming continued and the ministry continued to thrive. The Council asked me to fill the role of head of staff while we search for a new Senior Pastor. I'm happy to serve in that role, as I'm able to draw from my 30 years of experience in corporate management.

We've been blessed with gifted supply pastors who preach and preside at all services when Holy Communion is offered. The use of supply pastors, rather than calling an interim pastor, has helped to significantly reduce costs these past eight months. The staff has also made every effort to reduce costs wherever possible. They have gladly taken on additional responsibilities, while having gone two years without salary increases. Kevin and I are the only full time staff. The new pastor will be full time. All other staff is part time. Although the previous CYF Coordinator was full time, we are currently recruiting for a part time CYF Coordinator. We have not yet found the right candidate for that position. It's a difficult position to fill, and most churches are utilizing volunteers in that area.

Much of my time is spent in the area of visitation ministry, visiting with, and bringing Communion to our hospitalized and homebound members, including those living in nursing homes, retirement centers, and assisted living facilities. I respond to emergencies, meet with members going through crisis, families facing end of life situations and those who are grieving. I feel particularly called to that area of ministry. I also officiate at many funerals. When I officiate at a funeral for someone who is not a member, I always invite their family to come and worship with us, and be part of our EPLC community. It's a great outreach opportunity and many of those

families have become members. We also honor their loved ones at our All Saints services along with our own members who have died, and their families have joined us for those services.

After handling both the Deacon and Business Administrator role for the past 15 years, one of my goals was to hire someone who could learn the business role and hopefully take on that responsibility so I could focus my time on ministry. I am pleased to report that Arnold Greiff was hired as our part time Accounting Assistant in December of 2024. Over the last year, he and I have worked together several nights a week so that he could learn every facet of the business operations of EPLC and he has been doing a great job. I'm grateful for the accounting experience he brings and for his dedication to this role.

In January, Christine Schreiber was hired as our part time Parish Coordinator. Over the last year Christine has made a great effort to get to know many of you. She interacts with the congregation by scheduling worship participants, ordering flowers, maintaining the website and social media posts, publishing the monthly newsletters, the weekly announcements, maintaining the online directory, managing the church calendar and room assignments for meetings and building usage. She is also the liaison for all the outside groups who meet here. Christine is the "face" of EPLC during the daytime hours and is in the office Mondays through Fridays 8:30a-2:30p. If you haven't had a chance to meet yet, please call or stop by. We're grateful for her presence here and being available to answer your questions during the week.

We're grateful for our part time custodian Duane Smart and for our outside contractor P&B Cleaning. Duane handles all room set-ups, opens the building for worship services, secures the building after services, prepares coffee for Sunday morning coffee hour, handles maintenance duties, works with contractors and city inspectors, as well as cleaning duties. P&B does a great job keeping our building sparkling clean and healthy. I've heard compliments from visitors about how clean our facility is. Duane and P&B work together as our custodial team to keep our campus safe and clean.

I'm thankful for the dedication of our Director of Worship and Music, Kevin Zehme. In addition to his regular responsibilities of planning worship, arranging and working with guest musicians, creating bulletins, and directing the choirs and praise team, Kevin has helped in so many other areas in the life of our church. He has arranged for special groups to come and perform concerts at EPLC. Kevin has joined me on several pastoral care visits, providing the comfort of music to homebound members and those in hospice care, and assisted with poinsettia delivery. He has been a great help to me as we've worked with supply pastors these past eight months. Once I schedule the pastors, Kevin works with them choosing texts and liturgy settings, making sure they have all the information they need, as well as addressing their technical needs with the sound system. I've appreciated his partnership as we handle funerals together, both here at church as well as at outside funeral homes. Together we work with families to provide meaningful music. It's another way for the ministry of EPLC to reach beyond our walls. Kevin has helped with youth activities, as well as being a regular part of the Confirmation team. Kevin directs the Adult and Bell choirs, and we were happy to see the formation of a Youth Choir this year. Kevin is pretty handy too, and has been known to help with various things around the church. He's always willing to lend a hand to whoever needs help. It's been a great benefit to have Kevin reside in church housing as he makes himself available as needed. It's also a cost benefit as his housing is part of his compensation. As part of that, Kevin is the night watchman, keeps an eye on the property and does building lockup.

Our worship Audio Visual Tech team is under Kevin's management. We're grateful for the dedication of Lead AV Tech Toby Burkum, along with his team of AV techs. They are always looking for new ways to improve our online worship presence, as well as make our sound and video experience the best it can be when we're present in worship. It's great that our ministry can

be shared with those who are unable to be with us in person, either due to distance, illness, or being homebound.

Thank you to Jonathan Jedd for his leadership as Council President and for managing all property issues. I'm thankful for the support of a dedicated Council who prayerfully discern decisions that need to be made. Thank you to the Foundation for their ongoing and much needed financial support.

Thank you to all who have stepped up to help in so many ways. With the help of our volunteers, programs and events have continued strong. Confirmation, Sunday School and Adult Bible Study classes continued each week, and we were blessed with a wonderful Sunday School Christmas pageant. We're grateful for Lorene and Cindy and all who assist with hospitality. New members were received, and we continued to welcome visitors. Highlights of the year included our annual Pet Blessing and our All Saints services. Easter and Christmas plants were delivered to our homebound. Our Stephen Ministry program and our Card Ministry continued to support people on an ongoing basis.

With the departure of our CYF Coordinator, many people stepped up in amazing ways to keep our programs going. Special thanks to Lynn Freitag for volunteering to lead VBS and teach Confirmation and First Communion classes. Lynn is a Diakonia graduate and serves as one of our Stephen Ministers and Assisting Ministers. Kevin and I have been part of the Confirmation team as well.

Special thanks to our faithful Sunday School team: Mary Ann Triveri, Marge Speciale, Ava Greco, Molly and Chris Staron, Terri Guerra, Max Guerra, Lilly Guerra, Liz Creasy, Jonathan Creasy, and Katie Styzek. Your dedication is greatly appreciated.

Continue to pray for EPLC and our Call Committee as we go through this transition and prepare for the next pastor God plans to send to us. Thank you to Carolyn Nasheim for your leadership on the Call Committee.

I'm thankful for each of you who call this church "home." Thank you for your prayers and financial support. 2025 marked my 18th anniversary on staff and I'm humbled and grateful to serve this congregation. Blessings as we begin another year of ministry together!

Thanks be to God!

With appreciation and blessings,

Deacon Carole Edwards

Kevin Zehme, Director of Music and Worship

Another wonderful year has passed here at Edison Park Lutheran Church and again I'm very pleased to lead the music program and worship here at this warm and inviting church! There are many moving parts that happen every week that make the services and life at the church happen. Just as the people are the body of church they are also the part that makes each and every group work and be successful.

Throughout the year many groups and individuals volunteer on a regular basis to make each season and worship service special and inviting for people to attend and hear the word of God. We have a wonderful Adult Choir with 13 current members, a dedicated Bell Choir with 5 members, a Worship Band with 10 members, very talented musicians and singers that volunteer their time and talent regularly throughout the year and especially at Christmas and Easter to make them truly filled with beautiful music, wonderful Sunday school teachers and parents that

helped to make a great Christmas Pageant and a new addition this year of our Youth Choir with 7 members! I know I say it often, but we are very fortunate to have so many people here willing to volunteer their time and talents in so many ways here, not only in the music program, but in all areas of the church.

Since our Pastor left in May of this year and our CYF coordinator leaving 1 month later, the staff and volunteer groups have stepped up throughout the year to keep everything functioning and thriving. There isn't enough space to list everything that people have taken on, but many thanks to Deacon Carole for her leadership along with the Church Council to keep everything going. Also the committees and individuals to fill the voids without missing a beat!

Toby continues to lead the techs and make our worship services go out and reach our homebound as well as making the services easy to follow and beautiful. He is always looking for ways to improve and to meet the needs of our congregation, staff, and council. Thank you Toby and Techs!

I hope I haven't left anyone out. I feel very fortunate again to be part of EPLC. I want to thank the staff for their tireless efforts, the support of the council, foundation and committees and especially the people of the church for their warmth, trust and participation in the life of Edison Park Lutheran Church.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Zehme

Toby Burkum, Lead AV Tech

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10

I'd like to thank everyone for the support this past year. It's hard to believe I've been working at EPLC for just about four years now. The staff and congregation are like my second family, and I'm very thankful for the job here. The Audio/Visual Department consists of five people: myself, Cole Martin, Jeramy Hamm, Eric Couper and Jake Couper. None of what we do here would be possible without them, and I can't thank the team enough for the good work they do here. I'd also like to thank Griffin Davis for his contributions before stepping away.

Here are a few highlights from 2025: Loft project- I upgraded computers and organized the loft. Thank you to the Council for approving the budget for this project. The team and I have been focusing on improving the in-house production- things like displaying the cameras on the TV's, ProPresenter transitions, and more. We also worked really hard on improving the YouTube livestream. This year, we saw excellent growth. Our channel logged over 5,600 views and over 675 watch hours, meaning people watched us for over 28 days straight. That's amazing. We gained 23 subscribers. We gained over 60,000 impressions. That means over 60k people saw our content in their YouTube feed. My goal is to keep building on this progress and to reach even more people in the year ahead. Your feedback is very much appreciated. The tech survey lets you share your thoughts and I invite you to fill it out!

This position has been such an incredible part of my life, and I'm so grateful for the chance to serve here at EPLC. Over the past year, I've grown so much, not just in my technical skills, but also in my faith and leadership. I want to thank God for guiding me through every step of this journey.

Without him, none of this would be possible. I'm thankful for the support of this congregation, my A/V team and everyone else. I'm excited to see how the A/V Department can continue to grow and serve. It's been such a privilege to be a part of this, and I'm honored to keep helping EPLC in any way I can. Thank you for your trust, your prayers, and for allowing me to be part of this amazing community. - Toby Burkum

Ministry Reports

The Growth Team

In 2025 the Growth Team started the year looking at the Baptism process from the first request of baptism to the font and afterward. The team refined the process, updated electronic forms, and are looking for appropriate follow up cards that we can use to annually invite the child on their baptism anniversary.

Activities for the year:

January: Bingo night - Fundraiser

March: Wolves Game

May: Trivia Night – Fundraiser

June/July/August: Chicago Dogs Game, Ice Cream Social

September: Rally Day Potluck

October: Trunk or treat

December: Pancakes with Santa – Fundraiser

Lending Library –built by the scouts - Books will be placed soon.

The Growth Team meets monthly at 6PM on the third Tuesday of the month. If you are interested in joining this team please let me know. We currently need 2-3 more members.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all the team members for their hard work and dedication. I also want to thank all the people who volunteered their time and talents making it possible for us to sponsor these events.

Cathy Johnson

The following events took place in 2025 and were coordinated by our former CYF Coordinator Kaya Hougén with the assistance of Growth Team members as well as staff and other volunteers:

Cinnamon Roll Sunday - Fundraiser

First Communion class

Easter egg Hunt

Pancakes with Easter Bunny – Fundraiser

Church Yard Sale – Fundraiser

Mission Quilters

This has been a very good year with the generous donations of fabric and threads from the congregation, double, queens and king size sheets. Did I say we accept monetary gifts as well which would cover repairs on our sewing machines, bobbins, etc.

We took 85 quilts out to the Church of the Brethern warehouse in Elgin in September after our Quilt Sunday where they were loaded onto a huge truck going to Minnesota and sent to other parts of the world. We were notified that Lutheran World Relief will no longer use the Elgin warehouse for in-gathering but will have a new site by next fall. We also gave 4 quilts for high school graduates this Spring.

Our current quilters are Lynda Hartwig, Debbie Shug, Alice Rybak, Lois Johnson and Jane Hammar. We meet the 1st and 3rd Friday from 9am-??? Anyone is welcome to come and see what we do in case you'd like to tie a knot, iron some fabric or use a sewing machine.

We enjoy doing this mission project at Edison Park Lutheran Church knowing it will ensure comfort and hope to reach those who need it most. - Jane Hammar

[Night Ministry Holiday Backpacks:](#)

Thank you very much to our church and community members who donated one or more drawstring backpacks filled with essential items and warm accessories for The Night Ministry of Chicago. Empty drawstring backpacks were placed at the Welcome Center during the month of November for our members to take and fill with a specific list of items provided by The Night Ministry. The filled backpacks were then delivered to The Night Ministry headquarters on December 9th in preparation for their Holiday Celebration. Together we donated 33 filled backpacks and a total of 12 Gift Cards for Dunkin' Donuts and McDonalds. These items were distributed to Chicago-area unhoused youth and young adults in mid-December from The Night Ministry's Health Outreach Bus and CTA stations where they serve. Your generous support helped to brighten the holiday season for others in need. Again, thank you all for your generosity, your time, and your compassion for this ministry during the holiday season.

Kendra Kelly

[Veteran's task Force:](#)

This past year we received extra large donations of various food items for presentation to the O'Hare Airport USO. Two donations in May and October of food and snack items with a variety of sport magazines were delivered to the USO. During the May delivery we received hugs of thanks from the USO volunteers and were told to pass them on to you. The USO is a rest and recuperation area for our traveling military men and women.

We also thank you for your donations received on the poppy month of May. Poppy donations help support hospitalized veterans with care items not supplied to them as patients. Some of the poppies are made by hospitalized veterans. This has been an annual tradition since the end of the first world war.

If you have worn out US Flags don't throw them in the trash. Please deliver them to the welcome center. The flags then are presented to the American Legion for their annual flag retirement ceremony in June of each year.

We do not want any more wars. Please continue to pray for our military men and women and the end of war. Thank You!

Sincerely,
Tom Benson, Chairman

[Sunshine Circle Card Ministry](#)

In 2025, the following cards were sent:

- 21 Sympathy cards
- 32 Get Well/Thinking of You cards
- 4 Pet sympathy cards
- 109 Birthday cards

Submitted by Carolyn Nasheim and Phyllis Doyle

Property Report

Greetings from the Property Team...

This past year, three major projects were completed...

1.) Phase three of the stained glass windows restoration. As you may recall, the decision was made to do the restoration over a three-year period, but unfortunately, the final phase didn't occur in 2024 due to an issue with ComEd not wrapping the power lines. A big thank you to Tom B. for his relentless effort to get the overhead power lines securely wrapped (Tom wrote a nice letter to the president of ComEd) and then he acted as the point person for follow through with the utility. By having the power lines wrapped, it also gave us the opportunity to take care of tuckpointing on the Avondale transept wall.

2.) Harry H. and John R. Sr. really stepped up and did a yeoman's job for the complete restoration of the south parking lot. They put in the legwork, surveying every corner of the lot for drainage issues and access points, and then chased down bids from different contractors, comparing costs and timelines to find the church the best deal. The west parking lot was also resealed and restriped as part of the project.

3.) Just when things were running smoothly, our three rooftop A/C units chose to fail – mid-summer, mind you, when cool air mattered the most. We were fortunate to find HVAC experts to rebuild the units with new compressors and control boards, basically giving the units much needed repairs so they'd last longer and run more efficiently. Thank you Richard B. for working on the electrical by replacing the unit disconnects as well as a fan motor.

Several noteworthy projects were also completed...

1.) The lower level men's washroom had a new floor installed with a donation from Linda and Harry H.

2.) A generous donation was received to replace the narthex carpeting with sharp looking carpet squares. The ripped carpet near the entrance to the conference room was also repaired.

3.) The fascia board and gutters near the main church doors were scraped and painted.

4.) Harry H. and Beth B. worked on cleaning the North Hall carpet to remove many nasty stains.

Two Eagle scout projects occurred as well...

1.) The fence between the south parking lot and our 6608 Oliphant house was completely rebuilt as well as the fence that hides the garbage carts.

2.) Landscaping with new bushes planted in the large cement planter boxes outside the main church doors as well as leveling the soil and replacing bare spots with sod. Deanna E. provided input and acted as the liaison with the scout. The scout also built a church lending library that was placed near the corner of Avondale and Oliphant.

Other projects completed during 2025...

- Electrical issues corrected at the parsonage and church.
- Church water heater and kitchen (church) dishwasher maintenance.
- Sink drain pipes were rodded out at church as well as sewer line at 6608 Oliphant.
- Replaced thru-wall A/C in business manager's office with a mini-split unit.
- A 'deep clean' of the kitchen was organized and implemented by Cindy D., Lorene L.

and several volunteers.

- Sump pump under the stage replaced as well as the battery back-up system.
- Additional cameras installed around the church building.
- Medical devices stored in the archive room have been inventoried and some items distributed to other DME organizations in the area. Thank you Shane D. and Harry H.
- Maintenance and preparation on the parsonage and CYF houses.

Safety and security committee...

- The church experienced some minor vandalism around the campus this past year. Some thought should be given to installation of an additional camera along the Avondale side of the building. Thank you to Julio H., Rick B. and Scott K. for assistance during the July 4 holiday weekend keeping an eye on the premises.

Thank you to Jane H., Marge S., Lynn and Deanna E. and others for keeping our campus grounds looking great and taking care of the gardens. Working behind the scenes were people like Duane S. and PB Cleaning (Phyllis and Beth) making sure our church sparkles as well as cleaning after outside group usage. Thank you to Joe B. for being a resource for Memorial Garden plaques. Thank you to volunteers like John K., Paul S., Rick P. and others for tackling difficult projects. Thank you to people like Dave D. for always picking up trash whenever he walks by the campus. I truly appreciate the efforts all of you have made and I apologize if I failed to recognize you by name.

We will truly miss Gil Yost who passed away this year. He was a great carpenter and a much respected voice of reason when asked for his opinion on church maintenance issues.

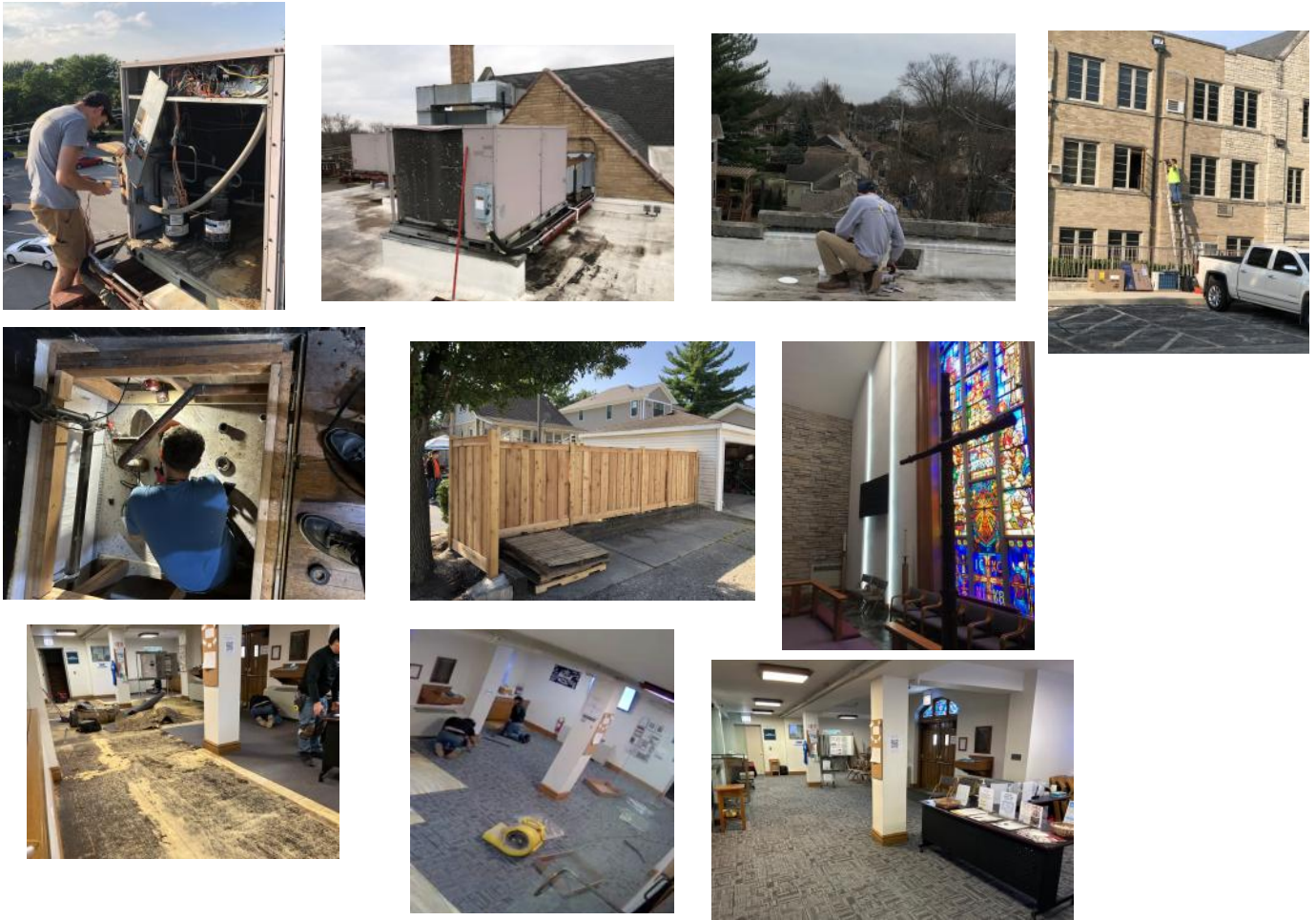
Thank you to all our members for your generous monetary support in maintaining our assets.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Jedd

Photos of Property Repairs





Congregation Reports

Jonathan Jedd, President of the Church Council

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." Philippians 4:6 NRSV

2025 can be summarized with one word... Volunteerism ...the practice of freely giving your time, talents and abilities to support our church without financial reward, but focusing on building community spirit, fostering a sense of connection and purpose. It's a powerful force for good!

Seeing Pastor Joe and Kaya H. depart this year was bittersweet, but glad for them moving on to the next chapters in their lives. We were very fortunate to have you, members of this faith community, step up to make sure our programming continued without interruption. Monday evening Bible Study, Vacation Bible School, Sunday School, Men's Breakfast, Confirmation, Christmas Caroling at the Danish Home, and the Christmas pageant capped the year! What's the common theme about all of these Volunteers!

The Growth Team volunteers helped keep the congregation engaged with great events throughout the year that opened our doors to the neighborhood.

Thank you to the entire staff for supporting our volunteers. A heartfelt thanks to Deacon Carole for her role keeping the church thriving with pulpit supply and taking on the additional responsibility as head of staff.

Thank you to those who volunteered to serve on the Call Committee that was convened.

Many meetings with discussion about where EPLC sees itself was had. The Ministry Site Profile was submitted to the Synod and the committee awaits names for consideration.

Anticipation is building as we look forward to celebrating the church's 100th Anniversary in 2027! We are grateful to the Almighty for bestowing his blessings on this congregation and lift our thanksgiving to Him. We are saddened by the death of dear friends and long-time members but are grateful for new friends and families who have found a spiritual home at EPLC this past year.



Respectfully yours,

Jonathan Jedd

John Cherry, Treasurer of the Church Council

Congregation Report

Well its hard to believe we have closed 2025 and moved into 2026. Time seems to be moving faster and faster as I age.....

This was another tough year for the Finances of EPLC. As hard as the staff has worked to control expenses, we still have the same challenges we have had for several years now. We have a budget of approximately \$600,000, yet our income is hovering around \$300,000. The remainder, as most of you realize, is being picked up by the EPLC Foundation. While the financial markets have remained strong, and the Foundation has made some excellent investments, this pattern cannot continue.

As I have stated in the past, an overwhelmingly large part of our budget is spent on our personnel and building and maintenance expenses. We have cut as much from the budget as possible while still maintaining the programs we all benefit from.

With that in mind, members of the EPLC Foundation have been talking to me about not continuing to support the Church at the same level as recent years. This will force our Church into some very tough decisions.

My ask is that you prayerfully consider your contributions to EPLC and the Foundation. As we work on growth, we will need to somehow sustain our wonderful Church.

I am ending my 2nd consecutive term on Council, and with that I will be leaving the Council, and my position as Treasurer. It has been a pleasure to serve the people of EPLC, and I appreciate the opportunity to work with all of you. I am still serving my position until we have had the Annual Congregational Meeting. Until then please feel free to ask me if you have any questions.

Thank you very much, I appreciate it!

Respectfully Submitted,

John Cherry - EPLC Treasurer

EDISON PARK LUTHERAN CHURCH FOUNDATION, INC.

2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Along with our board of directors of the Edison Park Lutheran Church Foundation I want to take a moment to share some of the work of the Foundation that took place in 2025.

The Investment Committee consisting of Treasurer Chris Behrns, Asst. Treasurer, Gary Duszak, Kent Davis, Todd Bridges and myself reviewed the portfolio and continued to provide insight and ensure the funds were fairly easy to manage while offering a return that would exceed our gifting allocation. We successfully achieved our goal of over achieving the gifted amounts. A conscious effort has been completed to consolidate many of the individual funds in our portfolio to a handful of fund groups, therefore reducing the committee's time and enabling our directors to more easily manage the assets. In the process a steady, but conservative approach has been maintained, to keep ongoing goals of the church among the major gifts from the Foundation this year.

While the market has been positive for the most part, there is always due diligence for safeguards to ensure our best position with regards to the commitments we have made to the church.

The 2025 Gifts to EPLC were \$210,000, which included the support of the CYF position in the first half of 2025. An additional \$7,501 was given to finalize the stained glass windows project. We discussed a renewal of the printed version of The Lutheran Magazine, which may be rejuvenated in 2026. As things stand, in the absence of a Senior Pastor and CYF, we are awaiting Council requests for financial support in 2026.

The Foundation began its work after 1965 and was incorporated by 12 members of the congregation, each donating \$100 for a total of \$1200. Our Foundation has retained all 11 of its 12 Directors in 2025. I am blessed to continue to serve God in this capacity with such dedicated individuals and would like to recognize them. The Board of Directors consists of: Mark Dupke, President; Joe Bartel, Vice President; Cindy Davies, Secretary; Chris Behrns, Treasurer, Gary Duszak, Assistant Treasurer, Tom Benson, Todd Bridges, Kent Davies, Monika Hemm, Alice Rybak, Paul Speciale. I wish to thank Julio Hernandez for his time on the board as he steps away at the end of this year.

The Foundation reminds each and every one to keep the EPLC Foundation in mind when allocating your charitable contributions. With your gifts, the EPLC Foundation continues to ensure the legacy and sustainability of Edison Park Lutheran Church.

...with God all things are possible,

Mark Dupke
President, EPLC Foundation

EPLC 2026 Proposed Ministry Plan/Financial Budget

Edison Park Lutheran Church Ministry Plan 2019 - 2025 Actual Income and Expenses 2026 Proposed Budget	1/13/2026 v1
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	Actuals							FINAL	Budgets	
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2025	2026	
Income										
Genl/Fest Giving	\$354,512	295,202	323,241	312,703	329,387	\$ 308,596	\$ 304,175	\$ 315,000	\$ 315,000	
*Other Income	\$30,976	231,165	29,407	23,829	23,926	\$ 22,129	\$ 19,169	\$ 24,000	\$ 24,000	
Memorials Transferred	\$6,790	0	0	0	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Preschool Income	\$33,280	22,684	45,884	0	0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Foundation	\$165,000	150,000	270,000	275,000	300,000	\$ 290,000	\$ 213,073	\$ -	\$ -	
**Foundation-Special Projects	\$0	11,570	148,367	38,759	42,221	\$ 48,893	\$ (23,809)	\$ -	\$ -	
Total Income	\$590,558	\$710,620	816,899	650,291	695,533	669,618	\$ 512,608	\$ 339,000	\$ 339,000	
Total Income Less Foundation	\$425,558	\$425,558	\$549,050	\$398,533	\$336,532	\$330,725	\$ 323,344	\$ 339,000	\$ 339,000	
*Includes Estate gifts, Program income, building usage, Misc. benevolence										
**Includes Loan Forgiveness: \$94,662(2021) ; CYF salary & benefits(2022-3); Window match										
Expenses										
Salaries	\$ 349,349	\$355,466	299,547	279,181	307,102	310,920	276,858	\$ 355,000	\$ 355,000	
Benefits	\$ 97,153	\$81,594	49,408	50,168	84,147	82,728	61,265	\$ 99,500	\$ 99,500	
Salaries & Benefits Total	\$ 446,502	\$ 437,060	\$ 348,955	\$ 329,349	\$ 391,248	\$393,648	\$ 338,123	\$ 454,500	\$ 454,500	
Ministry Teams:										
Outreach Team										
Fellowship	\$ 2,127	\$3,397	3,640	3,534	1,695	1,845	1,689	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	
Outreach	\$ 3,324	\$4,480	988	-136	26	554	165	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	
Growth Team	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	2,412	660	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	
Vision	\$ 2,708	\$4,948	3,384	0	-	-	-	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	
Communications & Campaigns	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	
Team Total	\$ 8,159	\$ 12,824	\$8,012	\$3,398	\$1,720	\$4,811	\$2,513	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	
Growing Team										
Education	\$ 4,981	\$4,071	5,829	9,214	1,253	2,208	\$2,564	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	
Preschool	\$ 7,204	\$3,029	2,345	3,979	2,656	-	0	\$ -	\$ -	
Youth	\$ 4,184	\$3,265	4,133	2,085	(934)	1,992	\$1,127	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	
Team Total	\$ 16,369	\$10,365	\$12,307	\$15,279	\$2,975	4,200	\$3,691	\$ 4,500	\$ 4,500	
Worship Team										
Worship, Music & Arts	\$ 20,508	\$20,900	18,043	9,124	24,870	11,201	\$12,276	\$ 25,000	\$ 20,000	
Team Total	\$ 20,508	\$20,900	\$18,043	\$ 9,124	\$ 24,870	11,201	\$12,276	\$ 25,000	\$ 20,000	
Leadership Team										
Stewardship	\$ 1,545	\$1,843	1,596	1,237	1,535	1,333	\$1,625	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,800	
Property	\$ 101,154	\$114,255	110,731	120,448	174,036	180,715	\$151,092	\$ 120,000	\$ 120,000	
Foundtn-SpecProjects	\$ -	\$33,753	0	11,570	-	-	\$0	\$ -	\$ -	
Office	\$ 22,949	\$27,694	26,586	26,975	33,364	40,551	\$42,349	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	
Benevolence	\$ 71,716	\$53,247	48,607	27,490	27,180	24,596	\$20,854	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	
Team Total	\$ 197,365	\$230,791	\$187,520	\$187,719	\$236,116	247,195	\$215,920	\$ 181,800	\$ 181,800	
Total Expenses	\$ 688,903	\$ 711,941	\$ 574,837	\$ 544,868	\$ 656,929	\$661,055	\$ 572,523	\$ 673,800	\$ 668,800	
Income/Deficit	\$ (4,712)	\$ 2,624	\$ 15,721	\$272,031	-\$6,638	\$8,563	\$ (59,915)	\$ (334,800)	\$ (329,800)	

EPLC 2025 Benevolence

ELCA/Metro Chicago Synod	\$15,007
Other:	
World Hunger	\$4,738
Disaster Relief	\$932
New Hope Food Pantry	\$78
Local Help	\$220
Lutheran World Relief	\$100
Sub-total	\$21,074
2025 Benevolence	\$21,074
2024 Benevolence	\$24,896
Decrease in benevolence giving over last year	-\$3,822
% change	-15.4%
Total Given by EPLC in 2025	\$21,074
*Seminary Tuition	\$7,800
*Anderson-Nasby Seminary Scholarship dispersed on behalf of EPLC by the ELCA	

Membership Statistics 2025

Edison Park Lutheran Church

Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2020</u>	878	-1%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2021</u>	871	+1%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2022</u>	879	+1%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2023</u>	879	+0%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2024</u>	888	+1%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2025</u>	884	-4%

Children Baptized in 2025	3
Adults Baptized in 2025	0

New members	4
Total members received	7

Baptized Members Removed during 2025

By death	9
By transfer/statistical adjustment	2
Total members removed this year	11

Baptized Membership at end of 2025 **884**

Number confirmed in 2025 **4**

THANKS BE TO GOD!



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