

June

Summary of Financial Information 2024



First Things - August 2024

Financial Summary				
	YTD		Difference	Comments
	Actual	Budget		
Net Income (Loss) Church	\$14,167	(\$21,599)	\$35,766	
Net Income (Loss) ELC	\$19,435	\$9,165	\$10,270	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$33,601</b>	<b>(\$12,434)</b>	<b>\$46,035</b>	
Grants (net)	(\$9,209)	(\$5,915)	(\$3,294)	
Without Grants	\$24,392	(\$18,349)	\$42,741	
Mortgage Balance	\$277,033			

Total Deficit of ELC	
2018	(\$17,051)
2019	(\$23,087)
2020	(\$2,544)
2021	\$39,832
2022	(\$10,484)
2023	(\$8,202)
2024	\$19,435
	<u>(\$2,101)</u>

Giving Summary				
	YTD		Difference	Comments
	Actual	Budget		
Offerings	\$109,562	\$98,885	\$10,677	110.8%
Debt Reduction	\$15,360	\$0	\$15,360	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$124,922</b>	<b>\$98,885</b>	<b>\$26,037</b>	

Assets				
	2023	2024	Change	Comments
	December	June		
Checking Account	\$78,454	\$62,873	(\$15,581)	
Money Market	\$0	\$50,261	\$50,261	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$78,454</b>	<b>\$113,133</b>	<b>\$34,679</b>	Net increase in cash balance

Liabilities & Equity				
	2023	2024	Change	Comments
	December	June		
Dedicated Funds Total	\$90,965	\$91,636	\$671	
Other Liabilities	\$5,799	\$6,205	\$407	
<b>Assets less Liabilities</b>	<b>(\$18,310)</b>	<b>\$15,292</b>	<b>\$33,601</b>	Net increase in equity

What does John chapter 6 mean?

Starting with the last Sunday in July and throughout the month of August our Gospel lessons in worship cover the time frame recorded in John chapter 6. On August 4 we will read Mark's more complete account of Jesus' walking on the water (Mark 6:45-56), found in John 6:16-24. This single chapter of the Bible packs several crucial moments into one narrative. This chapter describes the high point of Jesus' worldly popularity. After all, the former carpenter from Nazareth shows there CAN BE such a thing as a "free lunch" - He feeds the 5,000! But then, almost immediately He disrupts His popularity by telling the crowd something they do not want to hear.

Jesus of Nazareth is, in fact, God incarnate and the "Bread of Life from heaven." The Lord's generous expression of power had first been met with amazement and praise. However, Jesus recognizes that there is a flaw in the crowd's reaction. Rather than seeing the miracle as a sign, the people are merely pleased with the idea of getting a divine handout. This incident not only allows Jesus to teach important truths about Himself, it also demonstrates some of the spiritual barriers which keep us from properly seeking God. In response to His miracle, the people regress from seeking, to complaining, to bickering, and finally to abandonment.

Over the course of a long dialogue, moving from the seashore into the synagogue, Jesus attempts to clarify the spiritual meaning behind His recent miracle. By explaining that His ministry is essentially spiritual, not material, Jesus alienates most of those who had been eager to follow Him. This, of course, only goes to prove Jesus' accusation: that the people were not there to learn or to receive truth, but rather to once again be given free food (John 6:26). As we traverse the five Sundays from July 28 to August 24, may God's Word move us from the physical to more spiritual appreciation of Who Jesus is: Not just our daily bread Provider - which we surely do well to acknowledge, as we do in the prayer Jesus Himself taught us! - but He is the Bread of Spiritual Life for time and for eternity!

*Dearest Lord Jesus, You are indeed the Provider of all that we need for daily life. We give You praise for Your generosity toward us in this! But how much more do we owe You for the eternal life You won for us by Your perfect life and innocent death on Calvary! Empower us by Your Spirit not to complain or bicker about how You treat us in this life or about the Bible truths You try to teach us. Forbid that we should ever abandon You, as did the crowds who fed on those five tiny loaves and two fish! Bread of Life, because You rose from the grave and now live again, we too through faith know that we will live forever with You! Amen!*



## 61st Annual Lutheran Women's Missionary Society Convention – Sioux Falls, SD

The convention held in Sioux Falls, SD, June 27th to June 30th, was framed around I Peter 2:5 *Being Built into a Spiritual House*. The opening Thursday evening communion service, Living Stones of THE Living Stone, was attended by 1650+ individuals; while the Sunday morning closing service, *Built on the Solid Rock of Jesus*, had even more attendees. There were 976 registrations for the convention itself. Both the Thursday worship service and the Friday morning sessions opened with the presentation of the 70 flags of the countries where mission fields are located.

The opening and closing devotions on Friday and Saturday, along with the three featured mission speakers, focused on the convention theme. There were four workshops that were offered on both days; attendees could register for three. The three that Sandra and I attended were:

*The Impact of Indigenous Art and Music on Missions* -The adaptation of hymns into the music of the different indigenous peoples of the world; as well as the use of woodcuts to present Luther's catechisms, Hmong embroidered panels to present the 10 Commandments, and graphic art to present Bible stories to others.

*The Real Missionary Wives* – Panel of wives from Bulgaria, Africa, India, Indonesia answered questions about living in that culture and the impact on their and their families' lives.

*Navigating Changes with an Unchanging God* – work in Africa training indigenous pastors rather than congregational work.



Sandra Leonard and Pat Zander

The days were packed with uplifting, enlightening topics. To join with 1000 – 2000 individuals singing the hymns and saying the responses during the worship services and devotional sessions, to hear the varied pastors speaking in workshops and special presentations, and to see the enthusiasm of the attendees fills one's heart with joy and hope in this troubled world. **Next year's convention is in Tulsa, OK.**

### First Women Fellowship Opportunity!

#### Women's Vacation Bible School:

- August 5 - 8, 4 PM – 6 PM
- Attend as many days as able!
- Light supper provided.



### Harvest Strategy Committee

During this call journey one of the items that Pastoral Candidates inquired about was our "harvest strategy". A harvest strategy is an intentional plan established to assist in creating and tending relationships between our Early Childhood Ministry and our church. Aside from having the children come and beautify our worship each quarter, we don't have such a plan in place. At the last meeting the voters agreed that this is a need and moved to create a committee to help create this plan. Please let the church office know if we can add your name to this committee. *We need you, and your insight!* You can leave a note on the whiteboard by the door, email Diana Holub at [churchoffice@keepchristfirst.com](mailto:churchoffice@keepchristfirst.com) or call the office: 507-895-4775.

### Free Rummage Sale

The time is quickly approaching for the La Crescent City-Wide Rummage Sale, **Saturday, August 31**. This event provides an opportunity for our First Women to host our Free Rummage Sale. (Yes, I apologize as I realize the title itself is a contraction). Over this next month please consider locating items to donate, including boxes, and bags. *We will begin collecting items here at church on Saturday, August 24.*



### Thank you from the Rieke Family

Dear Friends at First Lutheran,

It has been a joy and privilege for us to be a part of your lives over the last five years. We have enjoyed your wonderful support and getting to know you.

We especially want to thank you for all the help, prayers, and gifts which we received from so many in connection with our recent retirement. We feel both overwhelmed and unworthy. We hope our paths cross in the future.

We're slowly settling into our new home in Holmen. But first on the agenda is some family time: celebrating Sue's parents' 70th anniversary, moving Sara to her new call in Las Vegas, and enjoying a little more time with Laura before she heads back to Vietnam.

We wish you the Lord's richest blessings and encourage you, as did the Apostle Peter to *grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Peter 3:18).

God Bless,

Pastor Mark & Sue