



# CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH

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7308 South 42nd Street, Bellevue, NE 68147

ALL ARE WELCOME

## Annual Meeting of the Congregation Sunday January 25, 2026

Call to Order

Prayer

Distribution of Materials

Approval of the Minutes of the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Congregation (p2)

Action on the Proposed Agenda (p1)

Ministry Reports

Pastor (p3)

Council (p5)

Treasurer (p6)

Consideration of the Mission Plan (p6)

Reports of Boards and Organizations of the Congregation

Women of the ELCA (p7)

Mission Endowment Fund Board (p7)

Unfinished Business (none)

New Business (p8)

Elections (p8)

Adjournment

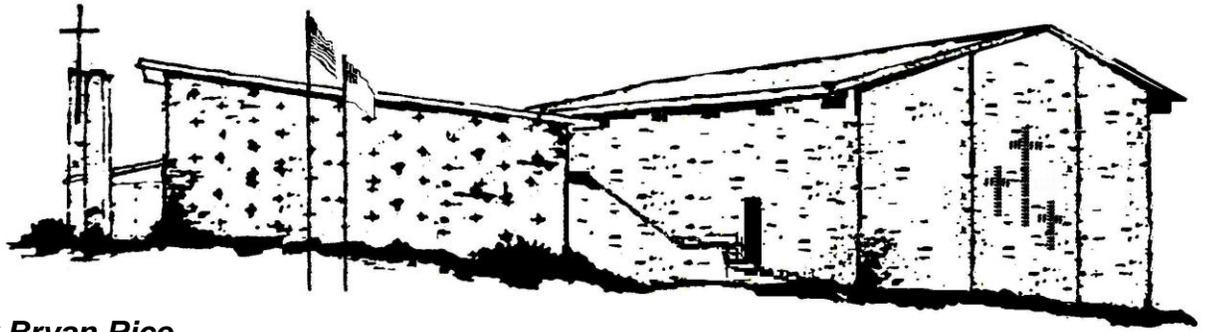
Prayer for the Meal and Benediction

**2025 Annual Meeting Minutes  
Christ the King Lutheran Church  
January 26, 2025**

- Council President, Nick Christy, called the meeting to order at 11:02 AM and confirmed a quorum of CTK members present to conduct business.
- Pastor Bryan opened the meeting with a short prayer
- Nick asked for approval of the minutes from last year, Mardelle Gocek moved and Dave Wiegand seconded. Nick then recommended everyone can read the ministry reports on their own, and if anyone wanted to add to their report, they were welcome. The agenda was approved. Deb Marx moved that the ministry reports be accepted en bloc. Ender Daniels seconded, and the motion was approved.
- Laurel Wiegand spoke on the Treasurer's Report. She thanked the Congregation for their generous support and was happy to say this year we were able to get out of the red and into the black. Our Capital Fund is just over \$11,000. She would love to see that grow to \$35,000 so our building insurance deductible could be covered. She is more confident today in our status than she has been for 2-3 years. There were no questions for Laurel. Nick called for the vote to receive the Treasurer's report. Our budget plan was approved.
- For the Mission Plan all information could be found on page 7. There were no questions. It was approved.
- For the Women of the ELCA there was nothing to add. There were no questions. A motion was made and passed to accept the report of the Women of the ELCA.
- For Old Business there was nothing to add.
- For New Business Pastor spoke about changes to our church constitution. We are a part of the ELCA and Nebraska Synod so changes that they make automatically affect us. Courts will word these changes as "You shall" so even though we have not made changes since 2012 these changes have affected us already. Pastor referred to chapter 9 and explained this deals with any conflicts a congregation may have with a pastor or bishop. These changes are based on court decisions. Many things really have no effect on us. One that will, however, is adjusting the amount the council can spend without having to hold congregational meetings and making announcements about that meeting for 3 weeks. The wording also changes to 25 members present for a congregational meeting instead of using a percent of the members. The last change is that council itself will appoint the officers for specific roles. Our congregation will vote in the council members. This practice is very common in churches and with councils. We will also have council members serve three year terms instead of two year terms. There was no discussion or questions presented to these amendments. April Marx made a motion, Trent Daniels seconded the motion, and it was approved by the congregation.
- Pastor Bryan proposed a motion to accept the slate of candidates on the 2025 ballot for council members and for Jocelyn Heldt to retain a position with our Endowment Fund Board. Angie Wicklander moved, Trent Daniels seconded, and the vote passed.
- Nick adjourned the meeting at 11:15 AM, and Pastor offered a closing prayer

Respectfully submitted,  
Debbie Cline, Secretary

## MINISTRY REPORTS



### *Pastor – Pastor Bryan Rice*

Across the Western world, the Christian Church finds itself in a season of unsettling honesty. Some call it decline; others call it transformation. Perhaps both are true.

After nearly 2,000 years of shaping culture, law, education, and art in the Western world, the Church is experiencing a marked shift: a decline in the cultural influence it once assumed. Cathedrals still stand in European cities, but few people worship in them. Seminaries and mission agencies continue to train leaders, yet must constantly reinvent themselves. Congregations, especially in the United States, often find themselves asking not how to grow, but how to endure.

And yet, this is not the death of the Church. The Body of Christ still lives, still breathes, still adapts. What we are witnessing is a season in which the Church's institutions – denominations, congregations, synods, and seminaries – are being asked to learn what faithfulness looks like when cultural dominance is no longer assumed. Can we accept the truth of our limitations while still bearing the fruits of grace? Can we honor what has been without pretending that vitality must look like it did in 1960, when this congregation was founded?

Once the moral and institutional center of society, the Church now speaks as one voice among many. Our celebrations no longer set the public calendar. Our language of sin and grace competes with therapeutic and consumerist narratives of self-fulfillment. Distortions of Christian faith have attracted many followers, and to some, the Church appears anachronistic; a relic of a bygone age.

Still, what the Church faces is not annihilation, but transformation. What fades in one form may reappear in another. The early Church understood this well. In the centuries following the Resurrection, the Church in North Africa flourished with remarkable theological and spiritual vitality, shaped by figures such as Augustine and Athanasius. Yet by the seventh century, that visible Church had largely disappeared amid political upheaval and the rise of Islam.

To say it vanished, however, is not entirely true. Its seeds were carried elsewhere. North African theology profoundly shaped Western Christianity; Augustine's voice still speaks in our liturgies, confessions, and reflections on grace. The institutional presence of the Church faded in that land, but its witness endured in ways not readily seen. Could the Western Church today be experiencing something similar?

When we speak honestly about decline – shrinking congregations, aging members, fewer young people in pews, tightening budgets – it is tempting to imagine that the Church is dying. But followers of Jesus are not afraid of death. The Body of Christ, broken and crucified, is the same Body that rises. Our challenge is not to avoid Good Friday moments in the Church's life, but to recognize them for what they are: passages through death toward something not yet revealed. Good Friday is not Easter, but neither is it the end of the story.

The waning of our institutional influence may, in fact, prepare us for resurrection. Freed from maintaining inherited structures at all costs, we may rediscover the heart of our calling: Word, Sacrament, and Service. Freed from the need to be powerful, we can learn again how to be humble. Freed from the illusion that we must save the Church ourselves, we remember that Jesus has already promised to be with us, even to the end of the age.

Even now, amid decline, new life stirs. Across the Western world, small Christian communities are rediscovering the simplicity of discipleship. Younger Christians, though fewer in number, often demonstrate deep commitment to justice, care for creation, and authentic community. Immigrant congregations, like our partnership with San Andrés, are breathing new vitality into old sanctuaries. These expressions may not resemble the grand institutions of Christendom, but perhaps that is precisely the point. The early Church was small, scattered, and Spirit-led. It thrived not by size, but by witness.

We are stewards of a rich inheritance: centuries of faith, theology, and worship shaped by generations who sought to follow Jesus. Lutheran liturgy and theology are treasures worth cherishing, not as museum pieces, but as living gifts that continue to form us for mission.

Jesus teaches, “Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well... Do not worry about tomorrow.” We cannot cling to what is fading. Forms must sometimes pass so that faith may live. The Church of the future may not look like the Church of our memories. And that is all right. God has always been ahead of us, already waiting on the other side of change.

Our task, then, is not to wish for a return to former norms, but to be faithful in our moment: faithful in worship even as attendance patterns change; faithful in teaching and baptism even when cultural reinforcement is absent. Research from the Barna Group indicates that people who say church is important to them now define “faithful attendance” far differently than in previous generations; often meaning once every four to six weeks. Actual practice is better... 1.6 times a month... about twenty times a year. This reality challenges us to be more intentional, clearer in proclamation, and more deliberate in forming disciples within fewer shared moments.



Reverse Advent Calendar	
Vegetable Oil	30
Rice	30
Pinto Beans	34
Canned Chicken	50
Similac	14
Shelf Stable Milk	17
Bags of Flour	28
Boxes of Pasta	29
Spaghetti Sauce	24
Cans of Tuna	80
Bags of Sugar	21
Other items	17

Last year, I sensed the Spirit calling us into deeper partnership with the people of San Andrés. I am grateful for the obedience that made that partnership possible, and for the unexpected fruit it continues to bear.

As I reflect on the chart from the Barna Group, I also sense a call toward two emerging areas of faithfulness. First, livestreaming worship has become, for many, the front door to the Church. Research suggests that potential visitors often watch a service multiple times before ever attending in person. While I have hesitated for various reasons, faithfulness in this moment requires hospitality rather than fear. In 2026, we will work toward offering a simple livestream option through our website, trusting that it may open doors we cannot yet imagine.

Second, the data shows that Gen Z (ages 13–29) demonstrates comparatively strong engagement. I find myself hearing the Spirit ask, “How much of your attention is directed here?” I do not yet know what intentional ministry with this generation will look like, but I am committed to listening, learning, and responding faithfully.

The Church’s story has always been larger than any one congregation, nation, or era. The Spirit who breathed life into the disciples in Jerusalem, sustained the Church through centuries of change, and guided believers through reformation and renewal is still breathing now. That same Spirit is leading us toward something we cannot yet fully see, but which, by faith, we trust will be resurrection.

### ***Council – Nick Christy, President***

It is with faith and gratitude that I extend sincere thanks to the congregation of Christ the King Lutheran Church for another year of faithful service and shared ministry. Year after year, it is a privilege to serve alongside a community that brings its gifts, talents, and resources together in service of God's work. The year 2025 stands as a meaningful testament to faith lived out through action.

Throughout the year, the congregation experienced continued vitality and engagement. New and active families were welcomed into the life of the church, strengthening relationships and enriching congregational life. Fellowship and fundraising events, including the Fish Fry, Chili Cookoff, and Saturday Morning Breakfast, were well attended and fostered both community connection and financial support. The Fellowship Hall continued to see consistent and active use through congregational gatherings and rentals, supporting both ministry and stewardship goals.

Financially, the congregation demonstrated strong commitment and generosity. The annual budget was fully accommodated through pledging commitments, with overall pledging increasing compared to the previous year. This faithful stewardship reflects a shared confidence in the ministry and mission of Christ the King and provides a stable foundation for continued outreach and programming.

Care for church facilities and grounds remained a shared priority. Members generously contributed their time and energy to seasonal decorating, deep cleaning, and gardening efforts throughout the year. Following summer storms, volunteers also assisted with debris cleanup, demonstrating care for the physical space and a readiness to support one another when unexpected needs arose.

Faith formation remained an active and meaningful part of congregational life. Sunday School and Confirmation programming continued with strong participation. Given the current age distribution of the congregation, special appreciation is extended to older youth who assisted with pre-Confirmation instruction or participated in Confirmation discussions, enriching the learning environment for all. Special thanks to Caroline Rice for her thoughtful preparation and leadership, as well as to the adults who faithfully support and accompany our youngest members in their faith journeys.

Youth involvement also expanded within worship leadership. More young people served as worship assistants during the year, strengthening their connection to congregational life and deepening their engagement in weekly worship.

Worship and music ministries continued to grow through the dedicated service of many individuals. Thanks are extended to Mindy and Crystal for hymn planning and musical leadership, to Lauren for providing thoughtful and seasonally themed decorations, and to all assisting ministers and volunteers who supported worship services. Members also shared their musical and creative gifts during worship, contributing to a richer and more participatory worship experience. A grassroots effort has begun to revive the choir, reflecting continued expansion of musical offerings from within the congregation.

The year also saw continued collaboration and shared ministry with San Andrés, reinforcing Christ the King's commitment to partnership and outreach beyond its own walls.

This report reflects only part of the many ways God's work has been carried out through the congregation. The love, resilience, and faithful spirit of Christ the King's members have continued through seasons of change and challenge. I am grateful to be part of this community and look forward to continuing to serve alongside one another. Thank you to all who contributed their time, talents, and generosity in making Christ the King a welcoming and faithful spiritual home.

**Treasurer – Laurel Wiegand**

Welcome to 2026! The financial status of Christ the King was stable in 2025. I moved our general fund to a High Yield savings account and built a small cushion from interest to put towards our expenses for 2026. Finance invested some of the cushion in CDs in 2024 and allowed them to rollover during 2025 to generate an increase on our return which we can use towards expenses for 2026. Increases in utilities, insurance, general costs are still creeping up, but pledges this year, although less than last year, will keep a steady stream of income flowing to continue to pay our bills on time. Many people provide offering without pledging, and this unknown amount of income has often kept us in the black. Christ the King remains in good financial standing with all bills paid, no debt, and a cushion of investments.

Thank-you for everyone who closed out 2025 with a gift to the capital fund! We have over \$22,000 in the fund as of 31 Dec 2025. As I have mentioned our roof deductible is \$35,000 so we are over halfway to my goal for 2029. There is over \$3000 pledged to the capital fund for 2025, thank-you! Of course, the capital fund is not just for the roof but any physical repair or replacement to the building. By maintaining a sizable amount in the capital fund important repairs can be accomplished without waiting to raise funds.

I also want to thank everyone who stepped up to help with the cleaning and maintenance of the church building this year. By taking care of the building we can anticipate when we will need to fix or replace things, which means fewer surprises. We keep the fellowship hall in good condition which our community likes to rent, generating much needed income as well as keeping good neighbors. To keep the fellowship hall in the best possible shape we hired a cleaning company to come in once a week to clean the four bathrooms, the kitchen and elevator room. Although volunteers did a great job, this ensures the facility is cleaned every week ready for use by the congregation and community. I think the bathrooms sparkle on Monday afternoons!

Our bills for 2026 show we are spending more than our expected income. I used a conservative income based only on pledges. Our income has historically exceeded pledged offering, so I am not concerned about the shortfall as shown. I think 2026 will be a good year for Christ the King as we look ahead with financial security.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE MISSION PLAN**

Resolution:

Whereas, Christ the King enters 2026 in stable financial condition, with all bills paid, no debt, and a modest investment cushion supported by interest earnings and faithful giving;

And whereas, rising costs continue to affect utilities and insurance, pledged and non-pledged offerings together have historically provided sufficient income to meet expenses;

Therefore be it resolved that the Congregation of Christ the King Lutheran Church approve the recommendation of the Council and adopt the Mission Plan for calendar year 2025 in the amount of \$194,016.

*\*This is a Council resolution approved to be forwarded to the congregation at the December Council Meeting and therefore does not require a motion or second.*

Budget 2026	Budget items
	<b>Operating</b>
	<b><u>Income/Expenses</u></b>
32,000	Hall rental income
3,000	Loose income
151,264	Envelope income
<b>\$186,264.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
	<b><u>Expenses</u></b>
143836	Payroll/benefits
13,620	Utilities
15,600	Insurance
18,320	Other
2,640	Synod
<b>\$194,016.00</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>(\$7,752.00)</b>	<b>Overall Shortfall</b>

## REPORTS OF BOARDS AND ORGANIZATIONS OF THE CONGREGATION

### ***Women of the ELCA – Mardelle E. Gocek, Coordinator – CTKLC Women of the ELCA***

The Women of the ELCA Bible study group met each month for fellowship and Bible study. In June we held our annual picnic at the church because of hot weather. In December, we held our annual Christmas potluck in the fellowship hall. We continue to use the Bible study in *Gather* magazine.

The Nebraska Synod Women of the ELCA offered one “saved to serve” event at Mosaic– Beatrice. Metro East spring gathering was held March 29 at St. John’s in Bennington. Our biennial convention was September 26-28 at Camp Carol Joy Holling.

Our Lutheran World Relief quilt group was active again this year under the leadership of Phyllis Carlson. Thank you to everyone who donated fabric and other items to the quilt project. Thank you to everyone who helped assemble the quilts. 16 quilts were sent to LWR in October. Christ the King Lutheran Church also donated 30 school kits to LWR. Thank you to everyone who donated supplies for the school kits. One quilt was donated to Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries for the quilt auction at Camp Carol Joy Holling.

We continue to collect canceled, postage stamps, greeting cards, grocery bags, and bingo items for various service organizations.

### ***Mission Endowment Fund – Beth Christy***

The Christ the King Mission Endowment Fund has been in existence since 2002. All funds are invested in a mutual fund managed by American Funds, headquartered in Indianapolis, Indiana. The Mission Endowment Fund was established to support scholarships, emerging ministries, and community-based projects that extend Christ the King’s mission beyond our walls.

The Mission Endowment Fund Board meets quarterly to review the fund’s performance and to discern future distributions. Currently, the Board is structured with five directors elected by the congregation, each serving a five-year term. We believe it would benefit the congregation to change this structure.

The majority of contributions to the Mission Endowment Fund are memorial gifts given in honor of friends and loved ones. While memorials are not required to be directed to the Endowment Fund, those specifically designated for the Mission Endowment Fund are invested and stewarded for long-term impact.

In addition to memorial gifts, donations celebrating life events – such as birthdays, anniversaries, or the birth of a child or grandchild – provide meaningful opportunities to make a lasting contribution. The Mission Endowment Fund is also an appropriate option to consider when planning charitable gifts through one’s will or estate, allowing Christ the King’s ministry to continue serving the wider community for generations to come.

During the past year, Mission Endowment Fund distributions supported the following ministries and organizations:

- Assure Women’s Center – \$400
- The Dignity Closet (formerly *Humble and Kind*) – \$200
- Lutheran World Relief – \$400
- San Andrés Congregation – \$500
- Pastoral Honorarium – \$300
- Salvation Army Heat Fund – \$200

These distributions reflect the Mission Endowment Fund’s purpose: to support compassionate service, global and local mission, and the care of neighbors in need.

## **New Business**

### ***Mission Endowment Fund Board Consideration***

The current Mission Endowment Fund Board election cycle was modeled after common practices of over 25 years ago. This practice is not serving the congregation well, as most people are unwilling to commit to a five-year term of service. Additionally the work of the committee does not require five Board members.

#### **Resolution:**

Therefore be it resolved, that the congregation temporarily suspend the provisions of the bylaws governing the election and composition of the Christ the King Endowment Fund Board, for the limited purpose of allowing the remaining active Endowment Board member and the Church Council to review and propose a revised board structure, and that no new Endowment Board member be elected under the current bylaws until such a proposal is brought to the congregation for consideration; said proposal to include consideration of a three-member board consisting of one at-large member elected by the congregation for a term shorter than five years, one member of the Church Council serving by virtue of office, and the Church Treasurer serving as treasurer of the Endowment Fund Board.

## **ELECTIONS**

If the resolution above has passed there is no need for elections as, at the last annual meeting, the Congregational Council structure shifted away from the congregation electing officers annually and the Council is serving co-terminus three year terms which will end January 2028.