



Community Lutheran Church

2026 Annual Report

October 2025- September 2026



Mission Statement:
Glorify God by accepting
all people as we are

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Frankford, DE 19945
<https://www.communitylutherande.org/>

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Vision Statement: We believe all people are created in God's image. We accept, welcome, and embrace people of every race, color, culture, age, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, faith story, economic situation, physical and mental ability, educational level, work history, political affiliation, or citizenship status.

All are welcome to the worship life of this congregation, including access to the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, and all are welcome and encouraged to join in our congregational life and ministries.

By accepting all people as we are created, we are committed to the work of anti-racism, social and economic justice, and to making inclusivity a reality for our community.

2026 Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda

November 8, 2026

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Worship at 9:30 | Pastor Carla Christopher |
| 2. Opening Prayer | Pastor Carla Christopher |
| 3. Business Meeting | |
| a. Call to Order | Mari Satterlee, Council President |
| b. Declaration of Quorum | Lonnie Riley, Council Secretary |
| c. Approval of Nov 9th, 2025 minutes | Lonnie Riley, Council Secretary |
| d. Treasurer's Report | David Nilsson, Church Treasurer |
| e. Presentation of 2027 Plan for Ministry | Mari Satterlee, Council President
David Nilsson, Church Treasurer |
| f. Questions and Answers | Congregation |
| g. Vote to Approve and Adopt 2027 Plan | Mari Satterlee, Council President |
| h. Introduction of 2026 Council Members | Mari Satterlee, Council President |
| i. Introduction '27 Candidates for Council | Mari Satterlee, Council President |
| j. Nominations from the Floor | Mari Satterlee, Council President |
| k. Voting: | |
| i. Council Representatives | |
| ii. Nominations Committee for 2027 | |
| l. Adjournment | Mari Satterlee, Acting Council President |
| m. Closing Prayer | Pastor Carla Christopher |

CLC Congregation Membership Statistics

Voting members at the beginning of the year: 120

Current voting members: 113

Church Council

Current Members

Position	Name	Years Remaining
Pastors		
Lead Pastor	Carla Christopher	Ongoing
Officers		
President	Mari Satterlee	2
Vice President	Deb Wittle	2
Secretary	Lonnie Riley	0
Appointed Positions¹		
Treasurer	David Nilsson	
Acting Financial Secretary	David Nilsson	
Council Members		
	MaryAnne Jasper ²	2
	Lee Truehart	1
	Dayna Feher	2
	Mary Radadovitch	2
Committees³		
Audit Committee	Joan Hennessey	
Nomination Committee	Lonnie Riley	

Nominations

2027 Council Candidates for a three-year term:

See Appendix A for Bios

- Don Nemeth
- T (Tina) Snapp
- Mary Ann Trueheart
- Eva Nemeth
- Richard (Rick) Franklin
- Additional Nominations from the Floor

2027 Nominating Committee- Candidates for a one-year term:

Lee Truehart- chairperson

¹ Treasurer and Financial Secretary positions are Council Members with voice, but no vote, and serve for one (1) year. Terms ending 12/31/2026

² Member has resigned position and will not serve in 2027

³ Except for Audit Committee Chair, Committee Chairs are appointed for one (1) year term ending in 12/31/26

Annual Reports

Pastor's Report 2026: a Message From Pastor Carla Christopher

Hey Team!

As I give thanks for the completion of my first year as Community's pastor, I return to my anchor those first few months, the passion and vision, curiosity and dedication that characterized the folks I met during summer "meet and greets", strategy meetings, and tours. The teams of Community weren't just people checking a box or phoning it in. Even when we did not have all the answers, we had a sense of humor and a willingness to roll up our sleeves. We've cried together, supported each other, and truly cared about where God is calling us to welcome and include and celebrate our neighbors and each other. We've also accomplished an incredible amount together, in ways that encourage me and inspire me. It's not always easy, but every single day I wake up proud to be CLC and honored to be your pastor.



In 2025 we've seen the fulfillment of our pastoral transition, praying for Pastor Karis in her retirement, and celebrating my installation. We've put financial transformation into action with updated payroll systems, donor databases, and record keeping for modernization and efficiency. We celebrated a successful stewardship campaign and continued implementation of multiple grants and are finishing out the season by proposing to you our first balanced budget in more than 3 years. The reimagination of our physical space has become a gift of Spanish-language worship and Bible Study with our ELIM siblings, an expanded function food pantry that requires even less space because of some wonderful engineering minds in the congregation, new life as a concert and film and community event venue, and being a welcoming host for small groups in our new conference room or large scale health fairs in our flexible vestibule.

We didn't just inherit goals from 2024 though, we worked together and prioritized growth areas for 2025. We built systems of support to empower our teams and ministries, from updating security clearances and developing clear mission statements with accessible goals to holding quarterly collaboration retreats for team leaders. We brought back Faith Formation and Scripture Study and the "Prayer and Care" visitation team, developed the Worship Team with increased support for altar care, expanded ESL into a comprehensive racial and immigrant justice ministry (who else loved Pastor Earl's book study or the learning groups with SDLARJ?). Our Social Justice Team has grown exponentially, developing rich partnerships and

expanding our ministry reach across the county as we support ending homelessness and getting out the vote...all while emphasizing a collaborative and invitational approach to share tasks and welcome newcomers. We have more than a working budget, we have a working phone and cameras and lights and internet and a functional website and both internal and outward facing calendars that remain consistently updated, org charts, and a centralized filing system. It may not sound the most exciting, but future generation of leaders will have so much more energy to focus of their callings. Future Sussex County needs us, so today we sew important seeds for future harvest. The "2026 Strategic Plan" is officially completed y'all!

In the new year, I'm hopeful for continued development in lived out loud faith and love of neighbor. I'm excited for renewed commitment to prayer and relationship building, deepening our skills in invitation and outreach so those seeking authentic and supportive community know to find us, reimagining our sanctuary to share the flexibility and accessibility the rest of our building now has, and actively involving more of us in ministry outside our building and beyond Sunday morning. We were made for such a time as this. Together, with the Holy Spirit, we can be the beacon of inclusive, creative, dynamic welcome southern Sussex so deeply needs. Let's do this!



Ever forward,

Pastor Carla at pastorcarla@bridgebuilder.church

President's Message

*Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?
If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.*

*If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,
even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.*

Psalm 139 7-10

Last year, I wrote about how the Holy Spirit has moved through me and through this church. As I reflect on this past year, I am again reminded of the words of Psalm 139:7–10, which speak of God's presence wherever we may go. The psalmist asks, "Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?" These verses remind us that wherever we go, whatever challenges we face, and whatever unexpected paths lie ahead, God's Spirit is with us, guiding us, strengthening us, and leading us in ways we may not always anticipate.

This year has been a reminder that the Holy Spirit is always at work, often in ways we do not expect. Pastor Karis had been an important part of our church's journey, and her ministry has touched many lives. While we had not anticipated her departure this year, we are grateful for the time she spent with us and for the many ways she helped our congregation grow in faith, fellowship, and service. We give thanks for her leadership, her dedication, and the gifts she has shared with our congregation. Though this was unexpected, we trust that God continues to guide each of us along new paths.



In my last year's report, I wrote that it was the Spirit that blessed us with Pastor Carla. Although serving as a solo pastor (with the amazing Pastor Earl's support) was not what she had originally expected, through God's guidance, her willingness to follow where the Spirit led, and the support of our congregation, we have continued to grow together in faith and ministry. It was such a joy to celebrate Pastor Carla's installation. It is a wonderful reminder that God often calls us into new places and equips us for the journey, even when we cannot see the whole road ahead.

Throughout this past year, we have continued to see the Spirit at work in the many ministries that are the heart of our congregation. Our thriving ESL ministry welcomes and supports those seeking to learn English and build connections within our community. Our Food Pantry ministry continues to serve our neighbors with compassion and care. Through our Social Justice work, we strive to live out our faith by standing alongside those who seek justice and equality. And through our Creation Care ministry, we honor God's creation and recognize our responsibility to protect and nurture the world entrusted to us.

We also know that our outward facing ministries are only a part of our spiritual journey. We must continue to nourish our own faith and strengthen our relationships with one another. Our Koinonia groups and various Bible studies provide opportunities to share our stories, explore Scripture, ask questions, pray together, and grow in faith. These gatherings remind us that we do not walk this journey alone. We are a community, connected by our faith and sustained by God's presence.

Another beautiful example of the Spirit moving among us has been the growth of our relationship with ELIM Church. This partnership has brought new opportunities for fellowship, worship, and service. Our tamale fundraiser was a wonderful occasion to come together in support of their church. There was great food, plenty of fun, and a shared sense of purpose as we worked toward a common goal. We also celebrated a joint bilingual



worship service, bringing our congregations together across languages and traditions. The Holy Spirit was present! In our shared prayers, songs, and fellowship, we experienced the joy of being one community in Christ.

As I look back, I am grateful for all the ways our congregation continues to grow, serve, learn, and reach beyond its walls. Not every step of our journey is planned, and not every new opportunity comes without challenges. Yet Psalm 139 reminds us that there is nowhere we can go where God's Spirit is not already present. The same Spirit that guided us yesterday continues to lead us today and will accompany us into whatever tomorrow may bring.

Thank you to Pastor Carla, Pastor Karis, Pastor Earl, our church council, ministry leaders, volunteers, and every member and friend of this congregation who gives of their time, gifts, and hearts. Each of you plays a part in the life and ministry of our church. Together, we are creating a place where faith is nurtured, neighbors are welcomed, justice is pursued, creation is cherished, and God's love is shared.

May we continue to trust the Spirit's leading, remain open to unexpected possibilities, and follow wherever God calls us. I look forward to seeing how the Holy Spirit will continue to move among us in the coming year.

Mari Satterlee, President at president@bridgebuilder.church

Outreach Ministries

Community Support

Quilting and Prayer Shawl Ministry Team

We meet on Wednesday afternoons from 1pm to 3pm starting the first Wednesday after Labor Day until the Wednesday before Memorial Day. This past year we did not start quilting until January. In that time we were able to complete 25 quilts. They will be distributed locally through Indian River School District's Outreach program, who is very excited and grateful that we are able to help them.

I would like to thank our team members who either in person or from home donate their time and dedication.

Lonnie Riley at lsriley74@gmail.com



Food Insecurity

Food Pantry



Thank you to all the volunteers and donors that give their time, talent, and treasure to support the Food Pantry Ministry. Our mission is to serve food insecure people of Sussex County with dignity and to ensure no one, especially children, goes to bed, work, or school hungry.

This year we served an average of 192 families per month, comprising 450 adults and 367 children. Each of these counts represents a person in need whose life was touched by our ministry. The Food Bank of Delaware provided us with 94,074 pounds of food for the cost of \$12,114.97 over the course of the last 12 months. This is one of the ways we multiply monetary donations

to be able to serve the greatest amount of people. We also source items such as produce, bread, eggs, margarine, personal care and cleaning products from local businesses.

We thank our corporate sponsors - Mountaire Farms, WAWA, Family Butcher, Weis Market, Hocker's Super Center, Harris Teeter Market, Delaware Hunters Against Hunger, and Flutterby. Our friends from the Estuary continue to support the Food Pantry throughout the year.

This year, Mountaire Farms will provide Thanksgiving and Easter meal boxes which we will supplement with turkeys from the Estuary. Last December, we received a very generous gift of \$10,000 from the Samaritan Thrift Store in Selbyville. St. Martha's Episcopal Church, Frankford Presbyterian Church, and ACTS continue to be generous supporters of our mission to feed.

We have had a couple of big changes in this ministry this year. One was the loss of our fearless and strong leader, Mona Burns. Her absence is felt every pantry day. A positive change is the new freezers and new configuration of the "grocery store" that we set up twice per month. This has been a bit of a challenge, but has helped streamline our distributions. We also relinquished our "Pantry 3" storage space to create a cozy space for Pastor Carla and small groups to have a quiet space to use. Extra shelving donated by Jesse Walter helped make this transition easier.

Our Food Pantry ministry remains strong because of dedicated volunteers, donors, and the support of our Community family.

Respectfully submitted,

Katie Jorgensen at mkjorgensen96@gmail.com



White Bag Lunch Ministry Team

This summer our congregation has provided white bag lunches for members of our community in need. After 13 weeks, we finished our commitment to children in our community. These are young ones who otherwise may not have had breakfast and lunch support for the summer months.

Thank you all for your support of this important project. Many of you donated money and food items. Many more provided hands-on supports each Sunday.



St. Martha's Episcopal Church in Bethany Beach provided the beautifully decorated white bags with upbeat color and messaging. It was an "All Hands-on Deck" community effort.

Fifty bags per week were delivered by Mary Ann Jasper every Monday morning to the Frankford Library. An extra twelve bags were added mid-summer for a large children's event. We used up the last of our supplies by adding 18 more bags to the library supply to support the youngest students who start school later than others. Total after week 13 we will have provided 680 bags of food for our young neighbors. Praise be to God for the gift of serving the community.

The Social Justice Team was the support group that made this opportunity happen. We will be turning the leadership of this program over to Dawn S. beginning with food collection in May 2027. We look forward to joining with the congregation in supporting Dawn in next year's program. We will look forward to your support again in May 2027.

Pam Pedersen at pamdean.pedersen@gmail.com

Justice Hub

Social Justice Ministry Team

We are blessed with a very active Social Justice Team 14-17 people strong. And we have stayed busy. Members from our Team have attended protests in Bethany Beach & Millsboro, and several No Kings protests this year. At Community, we led a "Buy Nothing" event against unfair tariffs by our government. We provided the congregation with presentations during and after services on Domestic Violence, Project 2025, and a screening of "No Place to Grow Old" concerning unhoused people in our country.

Learning and growing together took many forms. We participated in a Migrant Ministry Zoom in April, Gay Pride Festivals in June and July, and provided White Bag Lunch support June



through August. We participated with the League of Women Voters on a “Get out the Vote” post card writing event at the Frankford Library (August), and we had our own post card writing event at Community in October.

Our current focus is on connecting our church with community outreach programs. Family Promise is a program designed to help Sussex County unhoused folks get more permanently sheltered. Sussex Help assists and supports immigrant families when a family member is detained by ICE. We have made connections with both the Southeast Sussex Ministerium and the Lewis Rehoboth Associations of Congregations where we hope to share interfaith services. Stay tuned as we discern where we are being asked to work, and with whom.

This fall as Pastor Carla was installed, we anointed each other with oil. The point of that act was to prepare ourselves for outreach into the community around us. Please fill out a survey in November with the activities you might have the gifts and talents to participate in. Then pray with us as we await the moving of God’s Spirit among us.

Pam Pedersen at pamdean.pedersen@gmail.com

Creation Care

The Creation Care ministry team began the year with a movie night on January 10th. The movie Biggest Little Farm was well attended, and all enjoyed custom pizza!

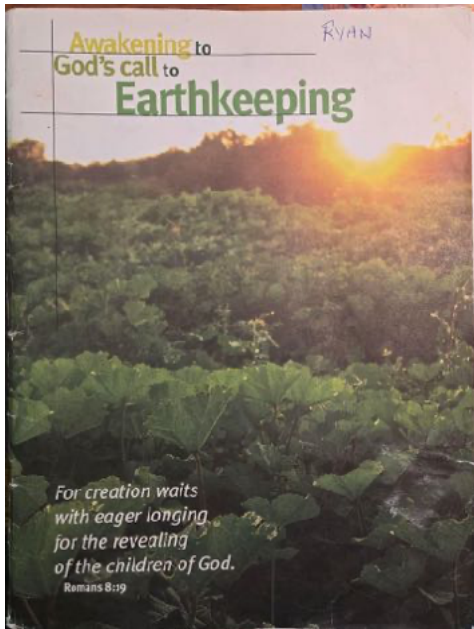
Our CCM team did an early planting the day before Easter, April 2nd

On Earth Sunday, the 19th of April, Dustin Thompson, president of the Delaware Chapter of Sierra club gave an informative talk on Energy Justice in Delaware after the church service. This event was attended by about 30 people.

It was also near the end of April, we also learned that we had been awarded the National Wildlife Federation’s “Sacred Grounds” grant, which would supply us with trees and pollinator plants for our church property.



We began the preparation for our garden plot in the grassy center of our parking area by covering the grass in black plastic in the hot days of the last week of July. Eight boxes of eleven different species of pollinator plants from the NWF grant finally arrived at CLC on September 30th. As of October 11th, we had postponed our planned planting date twice due to rainy weather. On October 10th, we had 15 people, including the ELIM program pastor Herlindo and his wife Anna and their children, helping with the preparation of over 600 Sq. ft. of garden area.



Our way of celebrating this year's ecumenical "Season of Creation," which begins each September 1st was by having a Zoom bible study, "Awakening to God's Call to Earthkeeping, which was held each Wednesday at 7 pm during the entire month of September. This year's Season of Creation theme was 'Living Water,' referenced in Ezekiel 47: 9,11-12. This year's theme fit very well into the context of our Zoom bible study.

Larry Ryan at ldryan2@gmail.com

Reconciling in Christ

There are four requirements needed for CLC to be a partner of the Reconciling in Christ Program (RIC). They are as follows:

1. Clearly state a welcome to people of “all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions” or LGBTQIA+” and name its commitment to “racial equity” or “anti-racism” in a Welcome Statement.
2. Be open to calling LGBTQIA+ and BIPOC (Black, Brown, Indigenous, Person of Color Rostered Leaders.
3. Allow sanctuary/community space to be used for LGBTQIA+ weddings and blessings.
4. Make a meaningful contribution annually to support the national RIC program.

“At ReconcilingWorks, we believe that God values and embraces each person as a beloved child, that the Spirit gives a diversity of gifts for the common good, and that Jesus Christ calls us to work for justice. When a faith community welcomes and invites God’s beloved by becoming RIC, this welcome extends to the full participation of that faith community’s life, including roles of leadership.”

[RIC Partner Public Commitments pdf](#)

This program is important especially for visiting and new community people looking for a church that is a safe place for them to attend. As you will see in the different ministries under this heading we are making significant steps fulfilling this agreement.

Lonnie Riley at lsriley74@gmail.com

LBTQIA + Ministry

June was Pride month. There was a weekly bible study opportunity for LGBTQIA+ people & allies sponsored by The Episcopal Diocese of the Susquehanna.



Next up, Community Lutheran Church was well represented at Milton Pride held on June 13. It was a much smaller venue this year, but the event was well attended with great food & entertainment as usual. CLC was the only local church represented so we garnered a lot of attention!

The Rehoboth Beach Pride Festival took place on July 18. Our booth was first in line as you entered the Convention Center. CLC volunteers were on hand talking up our ministry, handing out literature, applying tattoos & passing out the best SWAG at the event. As a vendor & sponsor in

the Sussex Pride business guide, our contact information is available to anyone interested in our faith community. Pastor Carla was able to use this event to collect information from many community resources that we can participate with as needed in the future.

Beth Bussler at bbussler@verizon.net

ESL & Latino Support Ministry

This year, the English as a Second Language (ESL) program at Community Lutheran Church has been much more than a class for learning English. It is a ministry built on relationships, hospitality, and a desire to share God's love with all people.



Through one-on-one time with students, our volunteers have the opportunity to build meaningful relationships while helping individuals develop their English skills. As we listen, learn, encourage, and walk alongside our students, many close and lasting friendships have developed. The classroom has become a place where people from different cultures and backgrounds can feel welcomed, valued, and cared for. During the past few months of his life, our ESL community embraced our beloved Ed. He loved working with our students and

they laughed with him as he attempted to learn some Spanish. Recently, we helped the student Ed worked most closely with to write a resume as she pursues her hopes for the future.

One of the most meaningful outcomes of the ESL ministry has been our growing relationship with the ELIM church. That relationship has grown beyond the ESL classroom as we invited ELIM to worship in our church building. We have celebrated together through fellowship and service, including hosting a Tamale Fest fundraiser to support the church. We also celebrated our first joint bilingual worship service, bringing our congregations together to worship God in both English and Spanish.



Our relationship with ELIM has also shown us what it means to be a church family. When members of ELIM faced difficult immigration issues, they turned to Community Lutheran Church for help and support. We were able to walk alongside them during times of uncertainty, offering friendship, encouragement, and practical assistance. These

experiences have reminded us that ministry is not simply about what we teach, but about being present for one another through both joyful and difficult times.

The ESL ministry has opened doors to people and cultures that might otherwise never have crossed paths with our congregation. Through English lessons, shared meals, worship, celebrations, and times of need, God has used these relationships to bring people together.

At its heart, the ESL ministry is about seeing every person as a beloved child of God. By welcoming others, building friendships, serving one another, and sharing our lives, Community Lutheran Church is living out its calling to share God's love with all people.

Mari Satterlee at president@bridgebuilder.church

Jenn Read at mikenjenread@yahoo.com

BIPOC / Anti-Racism

At the core of our faith is Jesus's radical, welcoming love, a love that breaks down barriers, seeks out the marginalized, and calls us into full community with one another. Our Racial Justice team partners with our Social Justice Ministries to serve as active expressions of this divine love. Where we may focus distinct societal challenges, our ultimate mission is the same: to reflect God's love by fostering a community of equity and understanding. By joining forces with like-minded community groups, faith organizations, and advocacy networks, we amplify our voice to challenge policies, practices, and structures that perpetuate racial inequality.

Over the past year, the Racial Justice Team participated in a variety of meaningful activities focused on education, awareness, and community engagement around racial justice. One highlight was a book study, *Nice Racism* by Robin DiAngelo, led by Pastor Earl. It provided an opportunity for thoughtful discussion and reflection on the ways racism can be experienced, understood, and addressed in our communities. The team also partnered with the Southern Delaware Alliance for Racial Justice (SDARJ) in several activities and initiatives. Mary Ann Jasper, Lonnie Riley and I had the opportunity to participate in a six-week small group discussion series sponsored by SDARJ called Dialogue Toward Ending Racism. The experience was both eye-opening and deeply meaningful. Our group brought together people from different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. Each week we gathered to share our personal stories, listen carefully to one another, and learn more about racial justice issues affecting



GAY WOMEN OF REHOBOTH MLK CELEBRATION
BENEFITING [SDARJ](#)

Sussex County. The conversations were honest, respectful, and sometimes challenging—but always worthwhile.

Some members of our group went to the movie screening sponsored by SDARJ and VegRehobeth of "They are Trying to Kill Us." Its story explores racial inequality within the food system and how it directly correlates to the rate at which people of color suffer from disproportionately higher rates of chronic disease. Many Community members also participating in various Martin Luther King Day celebrations. Additionally, we participated in an educational event at the Freeman Arts Pavilion for Hispanic Heritage Month where we learned history, cultural appreciation and love of neighbor.



Our church was proud to sponsor a concert featuring Crys Matthews , whose powerful music explores themes of racial, social, and political justice. Through heartfelt lyrics and compelling storytelling, Crys invited listeners to reflect on issues of equality, inclusion, dignity, and the experiences of marginalized communities. The concert gave our congregation and wider community an opportunity to come together through music, engage thoughtfully with important social issues, and be reminded of the role we can each play in creating a more compassionate and just world.

As stated earlier, the work of racial justice is inherently tied to the broader scope of social justice. Economic inequality, housing access, environmental stewardship, and community care all intersect with racial equity. By grounding both ministries in Jesus’s radical, welcoming love, we ensure that our church does not merely observe social change, but actively leads with love, grace, and relentless purpose.

Mari Satterlee at president@bridgebuilder.church

CLC Support & Growth

Welcoming Team

The Welcoming Team has maintained a core group of volunteers who participate in greeting church members, friends, and newcomers. As has been our goal in the past, our mission remains to help everyone who enters Community Lutheran Church to feel like they are in a safe and caring environment where they are surrounded by God’s love and acceptance. We continue to provide temporary name tags for all who are joining us for the first time or on a temporary basis and to offer more permanent name tags to



those who attend regularly. We have welcome bags that are given to those who are joining us for the first time, and these contain gifts such as jars of homemade soup ingredients, prayer squares, and writing pens, along with information about the church. We are also available to answer questions about the church and to provide guidance as to the location of the sanctuary and the restrooms. Members of the team extend their heartfelt greetings to those who join us each Sunday morning. As always, we are open to suggestions and new ideas as to how we can grow as a team and as a community of faith.

Tina “T” Snapp at tskippies@mail.com

Hospitality Team

By definition...”Hospitality is the friendly, generous reception and care of guests, visitors or strangers.” The core Biblical meaning translates simply as “Love of strangers. It does not require a fancy home or gourmet food. Its focus is on presence, charity and making people feel safe and valued.”



This year we have supported many focus groups within the church. We celebrated several birthdays & anniversaries. We hosted Mona's life celebration as well as Pastor Carla's Installation. We contributed to the presentations for Project 2025/26, Bold Woman's Sunday, the Freedom song/chant workshop with Diana, Mother & Father's Day, Earth Day movies, Social Justice special guest presentations, & the worship & fellowship with Pearl for Juneteenth. And we joyfully supported Ed with food & assistance in his time of need.

Here at Community, all are welcome. Whether it be a meet & greet, coffee & donut Sunday, a celebration or special event...we hope that all who enter our doors truly feel nourished in mind and spirit.

Beth Bussler at bbussler@verizon.net

Lay Visitation

This year, under the direction of Pastor Carla, the Lay Visitation ministry was refocused and rebooted with training for the ministry team. Pastor Earl Janssen and Lori Janssen led two training events in the fall of 2026, one focused on prayer and the other on active listening. Learning opportunities and support will continue into the next year. With this renewed focus also comes increased prayer requests from the congregation, shared in worship and the newsletter.

Pastor Earl Janssen at earljanssen@comcast.net

Lori Janssen at lorijanssen@comcast.net

Small Groups Ministry Team

Mary Ann Jasper at maryanntjasper@gmail.com

Study Group

With the death of our much beloved David Bartges in January the study group he attended for 15 years, and had devotedly led for almost 8 years, was at a loss. But they decided to keep meeting and continue studying *The Sacred Year* by Michael Yankoski through the spring.

When members of the congregation expressed a desire for additional scripture study, Pastor Carla blessed Thadine Coyne and Mary Ann Trueheart with the development of a fall 2026 scripture study. Thadine provides a geographical and historical overview of the Holy Land and the timeline of when the gospels were written. She compares the gospels and their authors in terms of what they chose to memorialize in their writings, their point of view, and their personal experience with Jesus' ministry. Mary Ann Trueheart offers prayer and/or reflection on that day's exploration. The study began on Sept 14th and will end on Oct 29th. The study is held in Luther Hall on Thursday mornings from 10:00 to 11:30. Kudos to Thadine and Mary Ann! They make a such a great team!

Koinonia 2026

Koinonia is a Greek word which essentially means fellowship. It is a wonderful way to get to know others in the congregation. At Koinonia we come together in smaller groups, creating a positive space where we can develop relationships, and support each other personally as well as in our spiritual growth. Koinonia is a way to develop deeper connections outside Sunday morning services.

Koinonia I

The first Koinonia Group at CLC began meeting in May of 2024. Last October, we celebrated Dias De los Muertos, the Day of the Dead, wonderfully hosted by Marilyn and Wayne. We shared Mexican foods while we learned about the festival from our guest speakers, Alfredo and Caroline, and then shared stories about our ancestors.



In November, Paul and May Ann hosted a cozy pot luck dinner. We watched a brief video on the history of Thanksgiving and planned for our Advent Afternoon event.



On December 6th we hosted Advent Afternoon in the fellowship hall for the congregation. There were crafts such as card making, advent wreaths, Scrabble, ornaments, hot chocolate, hot cider, snacks and holiday cookies. We shared our Koinonia experiences and invited others to sign-up and start a second Koinonia group. About 30 people attended including guests and family members.

Mona and Pat hosted our January Koinonia. We had a beautiful evening and a special tribute to our friend Dave Bartges as we shared memories of his life with us at CLC. In mid-February, Pastor Carla met with all of the ministry leaders including the Koinonia Leaders to train us in best practices.



Later in February, in honor of Black History Month, we had an insightful discussion on White Privilege. In March, Marilyn and Wayne hosted a beautiful Celebration of Eid where we learned about Ramadan and Eid. Many people brought Middle-Eastern food to share. Pastor Karis joined us and shared stories about her time serving in the Middle East.

In April, Mari led us in a special poetry activity where we all wrote and shared our "I Am From" poems. In May, Katie & Matt hosted Koinonia in their beautiful backyard with a discussion on Gifts & Talents. In June, Pam & Dean hosted and we celebrated PRIDE by sharing about our beloved LGBTQIA+ family and friends. In July, Judy & Fred hosted and treated us all to a catered dinner! We discussed our Personal Saints. In August, Mari & Rick hosted and Rick lead us in a mindfulness activity as we shared the poem "The Woodcarver" by translated by Thomas Merton

On October 30th Marilyn and Wayne will host and we will learn about the Diwali Hindu Festival of lights. We are also considering hosting a Chili Cookoff later this year, or early next year, so get your recipes ready and we hope you will come out and join us!

I want to thank everyone who graciously hosted meetings and to those who led such wonderful activities and discussions! To all of you, I love you, thank you so much, I couldn't have done it without you! And, special thanks to Beth Bussler, who courageously coordinated the second Koinonia group on her own, while Randi moved on. Beth you are amazing!

Koinonia II

The Koinonia II group grew out of requests to join the original group which became too large. Typical groups are smaller in number, yet our first meeting in March was attended by 17 people. The group had an opportunity from the beginning to make their expectations of such a group known, and the results were overwhelming similar. Our hope is to gather in a safe environment to strengthen our faith, find support, and get to know members of our community in a deeper & more intimate way. Those expectations seem to line up perfectly with the Greek translation of Koinonia, which simply means communion, fellowship & connection with others in a faith filled life. A typical meeting includes but is not limited to sharing a meal, discussing a topic, Bible verses, poems, an event or concern. We try to meet once a month & we have rotated meeting at different members' homes so far. Cookout & pot luck dinners have worked well.

Our 1st official meeting in March ended up as a snow-covered adventurous evening as we discussed a poem by Ted Loder presented by Mary Ann Trueheart. In May, Thadine led a discussion on "Jesus & Discipleship" which challenged us to look at who are the people in our lives who have shaped us into who we are? Later in the July, we experienced 100-degree temps for our summer cook-out as Randi gave us much to think about in our "Joy for The Journey" discussion. In August, we included college classmates of Thadine's visiting from Ohio to participate in our meeting. As one would expect from a lifelong educator, we had a pre-work to complete before the meeting. It was a discussion around a painting, angels, and passages from Matthew & John. And just recently, we gathered as one big Koinonia group at John West Park in celebration of living out the true meaning of Koinonia in fellowship, devotion, spiritual awareness and faith. There is no limit to what we can accomplish as "community."

The engagement of this group has been remarkable. It has been wonderful to see us vulnerable, willing to be open-minded, prayerful & joy-filled. Since Randi's departure, we are looking for a new facilitator for this group. If anyone is interested, please contact Pastor Carla.

Beth Bussler at bbussler@verizon.net

In October, both Koinonia groups hosted Koinonia in the Park at John West Park in Ocean View, inviting the congregation to come. Special thanks to Beth Bussler and her amazing hospitality skills, to Matt Jorgensen for being our Grill Master, and to Mary Ann Trueheart for being our Prayer Leader! We had 31 people come out and enjoy the weather, great food, fellowship, prayer, and a beautiful poem called "A Safe Shelter for One Another" by Mary Ann Byrne which expounds on the meaning of Koinonia. We also greeted a few young families at the playground and shared some hot dogs and cookies.



Internal Operations/Ministry Teams

Worship Team

It has also been a joy to begin planning worship as a collaborative and inspired worship TEAM. We now have a breadth of congregational members who share their voices in prayer, and through the scripture as assisting ministers. Special gratitude especially goes to our newly expanded and deeply enriched musical program.

Music Ministry

Our Minister of Music, Don Nemuth, has begun bringing guitar and classic rock music from his breadth of gift into the service. Diana Wag has become a monthly joy of folk hymnody, also supporting multiple concerts and outreach events offsite and organist, Kathy Waluk, enchants us on special occasions. Our now four member CLC Praise Team team blesses us monthly- Our Praise Band musicians are Dayna Feher, Lee Truehart, Lori Janssen, and Dawn Spivey.

A CLC Praise Team became a reality this year! We rehearse almost every week so that we can help the congregation to truly praise and worship through song. We lead worship and praise songs every 3 or 4 weeks. There would be no praise band if we didn't have someone to monitor and control our sound and God sent us Earl Janssen to round out our team. We are grateful to church council for authorizing some additional equipment for improving our sound and performances.

Going forward, our challenges are: space to stand when we sing and possibly adding another instrumentalist (need more space for that).

-Dayna Feher



Altar Care

Our worship preparation caretakers set the Lord's table with reverence and dedication, replenishing our ashes made fresh from Lenten palms, charred on a back deck grill, while ensuring our blessing oil is ethically imported from the Holy Land and scented with frankincense and myrrh. Deep gratitude goes out to the additional volunteers who have supported Susan B. in bread baking and communion set up and dressing our altar, as well as cleaning out decorations, serving items, and storage areas in healthy or helpful condition, replacing them with gifts like hand carved African hardwood jars and hand glazed pottery dishes to hold blessing oil.



Worship Prep



Behind the scenes, our worship planners research and write liturgy, source poems and prayers with deep meaning, and consult around musical choices that also incorporate suggestions and requests from the wider congregation. External voices that represent our community partnerships and growth through evangelistic outreach join us once per month to enrich our learning and allow us a more informed love of neighbor. A special guests have included presentations by singing justice musician, Crys Matthews, and representatives from Sussex Housing Group, Sussex County Pride, and Sussex Helps.

Pastor Carla at pastorcarla@bridgebuilder.church

Communications Team

Congregational communication is much more than our weekly newsletter, as important as that lifeline of resources and prayer requests may be. This year we have excitedly unveiled:

- Website updates with new member/visitor information, staff, “about us”, org chart with emails, ministry descriptions, and updated worship time
- Posted photo policy and assigned photographers at significant events
- Accountability to maintain current background checks for council members / team leaders / group facilitators / staff

- A Dropbox system to migrate necessary files into Centralized Church Filing System for all documents and records, both archival and current
- Established a working congregational phone, voice mail, message relay system and congregational general email with message relay.
- Upgraded modems, routers, software, wi-fi infrastructure, microphones, display placement and equipment to optimize livestream and digital aspects of worship and event accessibility and engagement

Podcast

The podcast in 2026 did not do as much as expected. An inaugural episode of Footbridges, the 5-minute impromptu talks with members of the congregation after the service, was published. As there was a changeover of media, the full-length and impromptu version episodes were suspended. Both will recommence at the beginning of 2027.

Lee Truehart at strueheart@aol.com

Social Media

Thanks to social media, our new website, and updated print publications, we continue to expand our outreach to neighbor through efficient, effective ministry that strives to be rooted on our shared connection.

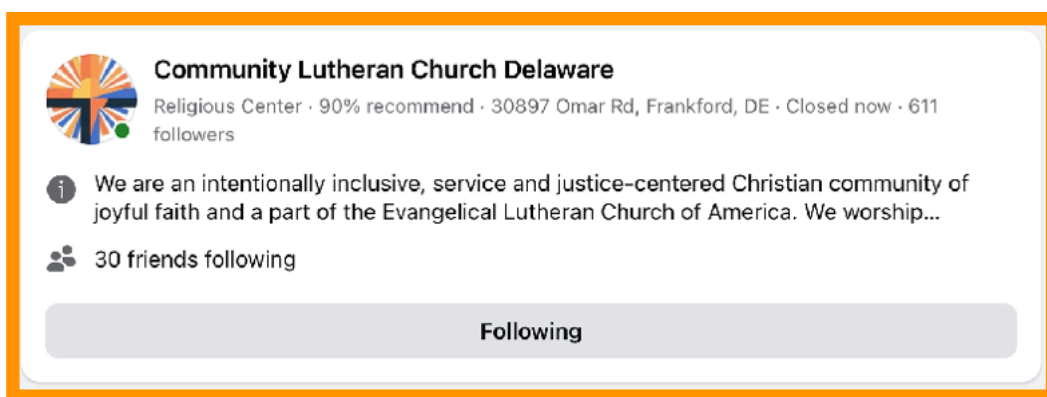
Clickable Links to our Social Media Accounts



Facebook



Instagram



Pastor Carla at pastorcarla@bridgebuilder.church

Tech Team

Audio Visual & Internet

The tech team is responsible for livestreaming worship and managing the screen displays and sound during worship services and events. Morgana Wiles provided primary leadership in this area during the first part of 2026. She was reassigned in September to a more supportive role while leadership fell to lay volunteers Earl Janssen and Lee Trueheart, who also prepare the worship slides each week. Glen Hodges is the primary camera/sound operator.

Significant accomplishments in this area of ministry this year included expanded audio capabilities in support of the praise team including new microphones, a new video display in the lobby/narthex, moving a monitor in the sanctuary so that it was more useful for worship leaders, adding a picture in picture during parts of the worship livestream, increased use of announcement loops in the pre-worship screens for livestream/sanctuary/lobby feeds, incorporation of audio control within the worship space rather than only the sound booth, and adding the ability of volunteers to remotely access the presentation computer from home so that materials can be uploaded in advance.

Training of additional volunteers is on the near horizon, as is continuing refinement of using our systems in line with their capabilities.

Thank you for the patience of the congregation through the occasional hiccups that naturally occur with so many moving parts.

Pastor Earl Janssen, Acting Administrator at earljanssen@comcast.net

Security/Access System Administration

While we are unaware of any current or active threats, Community Lutheran, unfortunately because of our commitment to inclusivity and love for all, has an increased risk for potential harm against our facility and congregation. We have been working over the past year to improve security and have installed additional cameras to improve coverage. We also updated our security system board to allow for greater flexibility and multiple automatic openings and closings in a single day.

Additionally, we installed new bullet resistant doors at our main entrance and the entrance to Luther Hall. All of these projects were funded through our initial DEMA grant from the State of Delaware. This grant has expired, however we do anticipate that our request for and extensions will be granted. This will allow us to apply



bullet resistant film on the some or all of the exterior windows and the glass doors into the sanctuary.

This year we received a second grant from DEMA which will be utilized for some additional exterior lighting and to contract for security personnel to attend our services and events. Again, at this point in time there are no current or active threats, but having onsite security personnel on site will improve our safety should an unknown outlying event occur. We would like to thank everyone who has graciously given time to care for all of us in making sure we are a place of welcome and safety.

Respectfully Submitted,

Deb Wittle at imawhitt@gmail.com

Facilities

The Facilities Team includes a number of volunteers who generously share their time and talents to help out with large projects as well as to perform all manner of behind-the-scenes background tasks. Throughout this year, we especially depended upon commitment from Matt & Katie Jorgensen, Randi Johnson, Jim Hartsig, Glenn Hodges, Lee Truehart, and Mary Ann Jasper.

The majority of Facilities effort can be divided into three areas: Capital Improvement, Maintenance, and Support.

Capital Improvement:

Capital Improvements are permanent structural changes or restoration of some aspect of the property. This year, major Capital Improvement efforts at Community included:

- Replacing the failed propane furnace that heats Luther Hall,
- replacing the mini-split heat pump system that provides heat and a/c to the Pastor's Office and the Food Pantry Office,
- replacing four ceiling fans in Luther Hall,
- adding carbon monoxide detectors throughout the building, and
- replacing the deteriorated crawlspace door.



Maintenance:

Community might be a small church by some standards, but it still takes a surprising amount of attention and energy to keep the building and property in good shape. Along with all the routine ongoing weekly and monthly tasks, here are some of the maintenance highlights from the past year:

- Repair of the failed fire/smoke alarm system,
- replacement of rechargeable batteries and lamps in all emergency lighting units,
- removal of trees, branches, and other debris caused by various storms,
- disposal of 25 cans of old paint, more than a half dozen old computers, printers, obsolete audio equipment and cables, and the shredding of more than 20 boxes of archival financial and other records stored the church attic,
- the clean-out, organization, and painting of “Pantry Office #3,” and the purchase of an office chair, to convert this room into a Pastor’s Office,
- replacement of a failed ballast in the Food Pantry Office ceiling lighting,
- securing a quote for the replacement of our antiquated fire/smoke alarm system,
- donation of a chair-trolley (along with 60+ folding chairs we no longer use) and two bookshelves to ELIM, and the
- demolition and disposal of the crumbling picnic table on our property.

Support:

Facilities also supported these activities that were largely performed by other teams:

- Replacement of the main external doors (to the narthex and Luther Hall) including work such as door framing, drywall repair, and painting required after the door installation was completed, as well as the replacement of broken tiles (by ELIM volunteers) that occurred during installation,
- replacement of the narthex bulletin board with a 65” monitor, including painting and drywall repair, addition of a new electrical outlet, and the relocation of the narthex coat rack; along with this change, the 65” monitor in the rear of the sanctuary was relocated which required additional drywall repair and painting,
- reorganization of food pantry space to accommodate additional freezers in Luther Hall, and relocation of the contents of “Pantry Office #3” into “Pantry Office #2,” and
- repair of broken hose-bib pipe to make water available for Creation Care planting.

Major future projects will include:

- Replacing a failed emergency lighting unit in Luther Hall, and
- freeing-up the closet in the room at the end of the narthex for ELIM property storage, and then re-organizing the main room for better utilization, and
- re-evaluating and dispositioning the storage sheds outside the building.

Thank you. Sincerely, and in peace,
Paul Bender at paulgbender@gmail.com

Stewardship & Finance

Stewardship Team

As you will see reflected in our treasurer's report and budget, your generosity and support for the ministries of this congregation in response to our Biblical call as disciples has been beautifully empowered by many of our members with loving generosity that included a rise in giving from 2024, continuing a trend of commitment and care. Our focus this year, which included completing our contract with stewardship coach, Pastor Eric Johnson, challenged us to honest conversations about the realities of faithful and intentional stewardship in 2026 and beyond. While remaining guided by our mission, we also recognized that depending on end of year giving to meet our expenses was not a sustainable model. In 2025 we carefully examined how our stewardship could more effectively utilize tithes and donations to increase direct outreach and ministry and also care for our congregation.. We made the difficult decision to reduce our in-house technology support, which is allowing us to engage an accountant to effectively manage essential accounting functions as our volunteer CPA, the miraculous Dave N., transitions into well deserved retirement. We chose not to renew our paid marketing and publicity agency contract, at a savings of more than \$30,000 a year, which allowed us to host and sponsor multiple public engagement and service events and participate in shared activities with partners like Sussex Pride Faith and Southeast Sussex Ministerium and complete several much needed building projects for the safety and care of those we shelter in this space. It also allowed as to purchase the technology needed to create centralized filing systems and upgrade ministry essentials like reliable internet access. Our dedicated team has pursued and been awarded numerous grants which supplement our resources and we remain dedicated to creative and new forms of development to increase impact within, and support of, each other and our neighbors in achievable ways.

Through these transitions, we have still grown our social media outreach and digital worship participation by more than 25% in the last year, and most folks seem to think Pastor Carla and Kim did a pretty great job designing our new website! Our teams are appreciating having Signup Genius to schedule food, pantry, pickups and dropbox to share files and

The music sounds better each week, especially after watching announcements from the newly revamped lobby's media screen. Our priorities in ministry, chosen by the congregation, can be celebrated in their reports. Please spend some time being excited about the growth in our ministries around Creation Care, Food Security and Pantry Expansion, and Dismantling Racism, Building Equity, and Empowering Inclusion in Sussex County. As we look toward 2027, the need for a place of God's unconditional love, inclusive welcome in the way of Jesus, and the kind of healing that happens when the Holy Spirit is truly present in a space is clearer than ever. Our Reimagine Team is excited to bring bold energy into the space we share. Our Social Justice Team is already planning ways we can work together to meet the challenges we know will continue to increase physically, emotionally and spiritually in this season. We also

must begin to look in new ways to who is not here at this welcome table, and how do we create invitation that reaches and resonates? I have absolute faith that with God and the incredible community we are building here, 2027 will be a year that shows how our good God can show up through God's people.

Pastor Carla at pastorcarla@bridgebuilder.church

Financial Secretary's Report

Firstly, thanks to all of those that volunteered this year to ensure that the counting, recording and depositing of church monies were handled expertly and accurately. We continue to use a team approach for counting so, if you can open an envelope, you too can be on our team. We'd love you to join us.

Almost 47% of monthly donors give online. Giving through our online platform Vanco averages nearly \$5,400 per month. And doing so helps the church maintain a more consistent cash flow so we encourage everyone to sign up for online giving at the church's website.

Giving to our Food Pantry has increased nearly 37% so far this year, not just from the generosity of our members but from outside organizations as well who share their abundance toward this signature ministry.

David Nilsson, Acting Financial Secretary at treasurer@bridgebuilder.church

Treasurer's Report

The year 2026 has been one of transition for Community Lutheran Church. We saw Pastor Karis retire, extraordinary support from our Delaware-Maryland Synod (almost \$50,000), growth in our outreach ministries and our partnership with ELIM church. While our general operation has become smaller, it is on a much stronger foundation for the future.

The Financial Information Report that follows is updated and shared with Council every month. It shows our giving and spending activity through September 30 of this year. It also shows our available cash on hand, segregated between that which is for general use and that which has been restricted for specific purposes. As of September 30, cash available to the general fund is about \$36,000. The only church debt is the balance on its solar panel loan of about \$3,800.

It has been an honor to work with members of our Finance Team that include Treasurer Emeritus Jim Landis, our auditor Joan Hennessey, Dave Potter, Amy Hamilton and Rick Franklin. We are always seeking new members for our team so if you have an interest in dollar signs, we'd love for you to join us!

David Nilsson, Treasurer at treasurer@bridgebuilder.church



Community
Lutheran Church

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

September 30, 2026

SUMMARY	Sep-26	Actual Year To Date	Plan Year To Date	Year To Date Difference	2026 Total Ministry Plan
OPERATING INCOME					
Pledged Giving	\$ 10,373	\$ 137,098	\$ 136,960	\$ 138	\$ 166,000
Non-Pledged Giving	2,260	36,120	40,065	(3,945)	51,500
Plate	141	1,455	1,381	74	2,000
Synod Support	1,000	58,000	27,300	30,700	30,300
Other Income	725	7,167	9,660	(2,493)	11,400
Operating Income	\$ 14,499	\$ 239,840	\$ 215,366	\$ 24,474	\$ 261,200
RESTRICTED INCOME					
Food Pantry	\$ 3,980	\$ 30,182	\$ 26,550	\$ 3,632	\$ 35,400
Music	\$ -	\$ 200	\$ -	\$ 200	\$ -
Endowment	-	789	900	(111)	1,200
Building Fund	250	1,435	-	1,435	-
School Supplies & Lunches	26	3,096	1,500	1,596	1,500
Restricted Income	\$ 4,256	\$ 35,702	\$ 28,950	\$ 6,752	\$ 38,100
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 18,755	\$ 275,542	\$ 244,316	\$ 31,226	\$ 299,300
ADMINISTRATIVE MINISTRIES					
Human Capital	\$ 15,689	\$ 165,937	\$ 187,070	(21,133)	\$ 249,000
Facilities	4,296	26,069	24,013	2,056	29,000
Finance & Stewardship	8,044	22,213	20,331	1,882	27,300
Worship & Music	804	14,676	23,100	(8,424)	32,000
Hospitality & Welcoming	279	1,285	2,520	(1,235)	4,000
Technology & Communication	727	11,263	19,425	(8,162)	22,200
	\$ 29,839	\$ 241,443	\$ 276,459	\$ (35,016)	\$ 363,500
SIGNATURE MINISTRIES					
Creation Care	\$ -	\$ (87)	\$ 6,300	\$ (6,387)	\$ 6,700
Dismantling Racism etal	645	4,791	14,425	(9,634)	15,300
Food Pantry	3,337	28,049	26,550	1,499	35,400
	\$ 3,982	\$ 32,753	\$ 47,275	\$ (14,522)	\$ 57,400
OTHER OUTREACH MINISTRIES					
School Lunches / Supplies	\$ -	\$ 291	\$ 1,500	\$ (1,209)	\$ 1,500
ELCA Ministries	-	10,498	18,900	(8,402)	25,200
Lay Visitation / Other	100	1,371	1,850	(479)	2,100
	\$ 100	\$ 12,160	\$ 22,250	\$ (10,090)	\$ 28,800
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 33,921	\$ 286,356	\$ 345,984	\$ (59,628)	\$ 449,700
Excess Income over Expenses	\$ (15,166)	\$ (10,814)	\$ (101,668)	\$ 90,854	\$ (150,400)

AVAILABLE CASH:	Unrestricted	Temporarily Restricted	Permanently Restricted	Total
General Fund	\$ 36,175	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 36,175
Food Pantry	-	28,803	-	28,803
School Lunches & Supplies	-	12,222	-	12,222
Building Fund	-	1,485	-	1,485
Youth	-	4,704	-	4,704
Endowment Fund	-	-	27,512	27,512
	\$ 36,175	\$ 47,214	\$ 27,512	\$ 110,901

Audit Committee Report



Community
Lutheran Church

30897 Omar Road
Frankford, DE 19945

October 15, 2026

To the Congregation Council

I have audited the banking records of Community Lutheran Church, Inc. for the twelve months ending September 30, 2025.

My audit was conducted based on relevant selected procedures from the Congregational Audit Guide provided by the Office of the Treasurer of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Those procedures include ensuring bank accounts are reconciled monthly, that all income has been properly recorded in the church's general ledger and that there is documentation for all disbursements and that they have been properly authorized and recorded.

Based on these procedures, the church has properly recorded its cash receipts and disbursements in all material respects as of and for the twelve months ended September 30, 2026.

Joan Hennessey

Joan Hennessey, Auditor

Appendices

Appendix A - Church Council Candidates

These are our candidates for a three-year term on Council beginning January, 2027. At the November 8th Annual Meeting members can vote for up to five candidates, which means you may vote for them all.

Richard Franklin Jr. Born and raised in Fairfield County, Connecticut, Rick was a practicing Roman Catholic in his youth. He and his wife, Lois, relocated to Sussex County, Delaware, in 2017. Throughout his career, Rick worked with regional and national auto parts companies and successfully managed several automotive-related businesses. His extensive experience in the automotive industry reflects a lifelong passion for the field and a strong entrepreneurial spirit. In retirement, Rick enjoys motorcycling, tackling home improvement projects, and giving back to his community. He joined Community Lutheran Church in 2025. He actively volunteers with the Food Bank and supports a variety of other local organizations, dedicating his time and energy to helping others



Donald Nemeth (he/him) was baptized and raised in the Lutheran Church in his childhood hometown. While he was living in Princeton, NJ he attended Catholic church and was a member of the parish orchestra. He became a member of CLC in 2022 and was a part of the music ministry playing guitar. Since then, he plays the piano on a regular basis for church services. He is part of Koinonia and outside of church, is the Chaplin for his masonic lodge.

Eva Nemeth (she/her), Baptized and raised as a Roman Catholic, she has been a member of Community Lutheran since the fall of 2022. She led two years of vacation bible school at CLC and continues to be a member of the Altar Care, Koinonia and the Prayer and Care team.



Tina Snapp (she/they/them). After 30 years of service as an Examining Attorney for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office of the Department of Commerce, I retired at the end of 2025. Since that time, I have been enjoying life and spending quality time with my chosen community at Community Lutheran Church. I was raised in the Presbyterian Church and also previously attended the United Church of Christ and the Methodist Church. I believe that the members of Community Lutheran Church have created a loving and caring community, whose dedication and commitment to the wellbeing of others speaks volumes about who we are as a community and what we hope to achieve in the future. Having the opportunity to be part of this community has been a huge blessing in my life. I became a member of the church in 2025 and have assisted with the church's food pantry, the welcoming committee, and the worship committee. I've also enjoyed participating in the book and bible study classes and the Koinonia groups.

Mary Ann Trueheart: Born and raised in Pittsburgh, PA, (go Steelers). After varying careers as a darkroom technician (when x-rays were developed by hand), medical transcriptionist, legal secretary, paralegal, and customer service rep, she retired in 2014. Mary Ann considers herself a recovering catholic and escaped organized religion 134 years ago. On her spiritual journey, she discovered CLC and now considers this her spiritual home and the congregation her chosen family. Mary Ann looks forward to serving God and God's people along and among all of you.



Appendix B - Congressional Meeting From Minutes 2025

Community Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting November 9, 2025

Call to Order – Mari Satterlee, acting President, called the meeting to order at 11:57 am.

Opening Prayer – Pastor Karis Graham led the opening prayer.

Declaration of Quorum – Lonnie Riley declared that there was a quorum present.

Approval of Last Year's Minutes – A motion was made to approve the minutes for November 10, 2024 was made by Doris Ann Pierce and seconded by Mona Burns. It passed unanimously. Mari Satterlee presented our plan for ministry for the 2026 year.

Treasurer's Report – David Nilsson opened by saying we are doing good for the 2025 year due to the \$50,000 matching gift campaign. We exceeded the \$25,000 by \$5600. For our spending plan for next year the finance team anticipated salaries, utilities, synod offering and ministries. Our plan for ministries is Creation Care, Anti Racism, and Social Justice which includes the Food Pantry.

Pastor Karis gave brief comments of her work in the field. In order to start a satellite location you need 30 people. As of now she has more than that. The people in the Lewes, Milton and Rehoboth are varied demographic from the Dagsboro and Frankford area. Many are hurt and looking for a place to belong.

A motion to have and support the plan for ministries, Creation Care, Anti Racism, and Social Justice was made by David Nilsson and seconded by Doris Ann Pierce. It passed unanimously.

Voting for Council Members - The current council members that do not need to be voted in are Mary Ann Jasper, Lonnie Riley, and Lee Trueheart. Several council members were appointed due to people stepping off council for personal reasons so they will need to be voted on along with members running for council who are filling vacancies due to terms expiring. The people that need to be voted on are Dayna Feher, Mary Radatovich, Mari Satterlee, Deb Wittle, and Mark Zahner.

Nominations from the floor – Ed Mayfield was nominated from the floor.

All candidates that were voted for were elected by majority vote.

Nominating Committee for 2027 council – A motion was made for Lonnie Riley (chair), Marilyn Paugh, and Dean Pederson to be the nominating committee for next year was made by Mary Ann Jasper, seconded by Katie Jorgensen. It passed unanimously.

Closing Prayer – Pastor Carla Christopher.

Adjourn – 12:52

Respectfully Submitted,

Lonnie Riley

Appendix C- Plan for Ministry- January 2027- December 2027

The church's previous three (2024-2026) plans for ministry were self-proclaimed as "aspirational." Team leaders provided their wish lists of expenses to the finance team and totals were simply compiled for Council's approval without regard to current levels of giving. Consequently, we needed to raise an extra \$50,000 from the congregation in 2025 and the Synod provided about that same amount of extra support in 2026. For 2027, our plan for ministry is a bit more "respirational," one about which we can all breathe a little easier.

Our 2027 plan for ministry provides all the necessary resources for the church to carry out its ministries and meet its obligations. To better align our spending with realistic income expectations, however, we've changed our approach in certain areas. Because of our wonderful praise team, we are not planning to import large musical acts without sponsorship. The technology and communication we now employ should not require additional investment in 2027. With Pastor Karis' retirement, our personnel costs reflect the current pastoral needs of the congregation. We've considered the actual costs of signature ministries spent this year and provided similar resources for next year.

As footnoted on the summary below, the totals do not include expenses for the Food Pantry and School Lunches/Supplies (White Bag Lunches). These ministries are blessed to be self-supporting, largely because of contributions from other community organizations and churches along with the thousands of pounds of food provided by the Food Bank of Delaware.

It is with God's guidance that we be good stewards of His abundance and we believe the plan below adequately reflects that commitment.

	Total Thru 09/30/2026 (*)	Total 2026 Plan (*)	2027 Total	Change from 2026 Plan	% Change
ADMINISTRATIVE/INTERNAL					
Human Capital	\$ 165,937	\$ 249,000	\$ 115,000	\$ (134,000)	-53.8%
Facilities & Security	26,069	29,000	29,120	120	0.4%
Finance & Stewardship	22,213	27,300	28,700	1,400	5.1%
Technology & Communication	11,263	22,200	7,480	(14,720)	-66.3%
Worship & Music	14,676	32,000	13,400	(18,600)	-58.1%
Hospitality & Welcoming	1,285	4,000	500	(3,500)	-87.5%
	<u>\$ 241,443</u>	<u>\$ 363,500</u>	<u>\$ 194,200</u>	<u>\$ (169,300)</u>	<u>-46.6%</u>
OUTREACH/EXTERNAL					
Dismantling Racism, etal	\$ 4,791	\$ 15,300	\$ 4,500	\$ (10,800)	-70.6%
Creation Care	(87)	6,700	500	(6,200)	100.0%
Other Outreach	12,160	28,800	10,800	(18,000)	-62.5%
	<u>\$ 16,864</u>	<u>\$ 50,800</u>	<u>\$ 15,800</u>	<u>\$ (35,000)</u>	<u>-69%</u>
 TOTALS	 <u>\$ 258,307</u>	 <u>\$ 414,300</u>	 <u>\$ 210,000</u>	 <u>\$ (204,300)</u>	 <u>-49.3%</u>

(*) Totals do not include expenses for Food Pantry and School Lunches/Supplies since those ministries are self-supporting