

You

*Belong*

to God, each other and the world,  
and that's the BEST NEWS!

Stewardship 2024



ST STEPHEN'S  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

# *Belong.*

A word we are drawn to throughout our lives. To belong means we made it, we survived, we are in. Much of what we do is a search to belong in some way. Through Jesus, we already belong, we are his, it's been promised. That's the good news!

Like a family, this ministry continues to evolve and grow, both inside and outside our walls, and celebrate the faith we share. Amazing work is being done to create new and thoughtful ways to connect to God, to grow our faith and to walk in God's hope and love. Together we belong to a great community!

Everything you do for St Stephen's uplifts this ministry and each gift you bring to the table is received in gratitude and is invested into God's kingdom.



- YOUR STEWARDSHIP TEAM

## *Connect With All Ages*

We strive to strengthen our connections with God for kids of all ages through education, service and worship.

- Faith Formation - contemporary worship, education and fun for the young and the young at heart.
- Youth Education including Wee Wonder, Youth Confirmation and Youth Group,
- Onsite outreach and fellowship with Young Life Northern Dakota County
- Sponsored mission trips, fundraiser activities and service projects where all are invited to participate
- Opportunities to participate in our ministry through music, lay leader roles, fellowship, and other groups and committees that make worship a reflections of God's love.



## *A Space for All*

Maintaining a space for not just the congregation, but for other groups, non-profits and schools to use in positive ways is a significant part of who we are and how we invite our community. We are a home for:

- Mississippi River Valley Montessori School
- ISD 197 School Age Care
- Young Life, Northern Dakota County
- The Boy Scouts
- Liberating Spirit Church uses our Lounge for their worship services
- House of Life Christian Community
- The general public and members for weddings and memorial services





## Missions & Outreach

Service is a critical component of our ministry as we strive to impact our community and God's world through our missions and outreach.

- Why sell it when you can just give it away? Initiatives like The Give-Away occur in the spring and fall and spread joy to all.
- Faithful Connections — Intentional outreach to homebound members who miss church and their friends and appreciate feeling connected
- Complete service projects to express gratitude for all we are blessed with through service events such as God's Work Our Hands, Loaves & Fishes and Feed My Starving Children
- Lutheran Mideast Development, where we learn from and share with persons from a variety of cultures and faith.



# Financial Focus

All factors of this ministry are supported through your generosity. Our annual budget is based on anticipated giving from the prior year and through Intentions received. However, both our General Offering and Intentions continue to decline. We need to work together to change our present financial trajectory from a shrinking outlook to a thriving, resourceful future.

## Your Offering

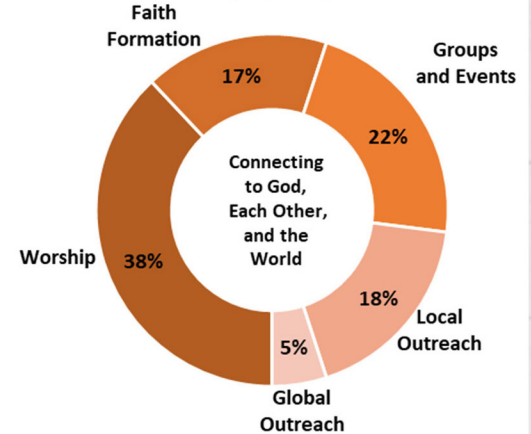
Offerings designated to "General Offering" are used to fund the operating expenses and committees of the church. In addition, 10% of your General Offerings go toward our external Ministries.

Other gifts you designate to the ministries listed to the right are not counted toward our annual budget and are considered separate gifts to those ministries.

## ... the Bottom Line

The 2023 budgeted expenses were \$96,000 higher than expected income. You can help close this gap by increasing your giving by 10% each year for the next 3 years! If your family is not currently giving regularly, please consider starting with \$10 a month.

2023 Budgeted Expenses by Ministry Area  
Total Expenses = \$545K



### MINISTRIES SUPPORTED BY PERSONAL DESIGNATED GIFTS:

- Neighbors, Inc.
- Loaves & Fishes
- Feed My Starving Children
- Lutheran Mideast Development
- Young Life
- Tanzania Scholarships
- ELCA Disaster Fund
- Lutheran World Relief
- Via De Cristo
- Alaska VBS

# You Can Make a Difference

**Step 1:** Consider, pray on and plan your Intention for 2024 to help us maintain a fully supported 2024 budget and sustain our ministry.

**Step 2:** Turn in the enclosed Intention card:

- ◆ Bring your completed **Intention Card** with you to worship starting 11/19/2023;
- ◆ Drop it off or mail it to the church by the end of the year;
- ◆ Use the convenient “Save the Stamp” QR code below.

**Step 3:** Choose or Update Giving Method

- ◆ Use the QR Code below to access the online giving tool, also found on the website.
- ◆ If you use Automatic Withdrawals, you will receive a form in the mail.
- ◆ Use Bill Pay through your bank (they write the check for you!)
- ◆ To make your offering by mail or in person, please use an offering envelope found in the pews (or we can mail you some!).

“SAVE THE STAMP”  
INTENTION FORM



SECURE GIVING  
VIA VANCO ONLINE



*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others,  
as faithful stewards of God's grace in various forms.*

1 Peter 4:10

*Just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.*

2 Corinthians 8:7



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