

Stewardship: A Life of Faith



*“[Jesus] sat down opposite the treasury and watched the crowd putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums. A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then he called his disciples and said to them, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.” – Mark 12:42-44*

Many of us are probably familiar with this Bible story. Jesus and his disciples are sitting outside the Temple treasury after Jesus has finished preaching / teaching and a poor widow comes and makes her offering to the Temple. On the surface it seems straight forward. It’s a story about giving money to the Temple or today to the Church. To be fair that is certainly part of this story, but like all stories in holy scripture there are layers of meaning.

Yes, Jesus praises the widows generosity, and yes Jesus talked A LOT about money / possessions in his earthly ministry.[\[1\]](#) Why? It was not because Jesus wanted to give those who are wealthy a permanent guilt trip, it was not to teach that being economically poor automatically brings salvation and economic wealth brings damnation, it was not to cause congregations to dread that time of year when stewardship season comes.

One of the reasons Jesus talked a lot about money / wealth / possessions is because he knew that money can separate us from God and each other when we obsess over it, when we weaponize it, and when too many people in need suffer from lack of it. All these are major concerns that God has and reveals in the Old Testament which Jesus is steeped in.

Jesus praises the widow's offering because she truly believes that God will provide what she needs even if she does not know how. She believes that the Temple will fulfill its holy obligation to use the offerings to provide for those in need in various ways. In her giving she is both praising God, but also reminding the Temple and its administration / authorities that they have a job to do: provide for the needs of others in the name of God.

Stewardship is about faith, hope, and trust in God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It's about celebrating that God appoints each of us and gives us various gifts to use to glorify God, serve others, and thus grow in our own faith. Stewardship is not a one time event but a lifestyle. Stewardship is all about discipleship. Next month (February) we will enter a time of stewardship at Hope. We will hear in holy scripture how stewardship is a holistic way of life that includes economics, the environment, worship, and even self-care!

I hope that this time will be one of joy for you as we hear again that everyone, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, economic status, etc. IS given gifts / talents / and abilities that uniquely proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and that the Kingdom of God has come near. We will conclude the season on Sunday, February 16th with a special potluck lunch following worship.

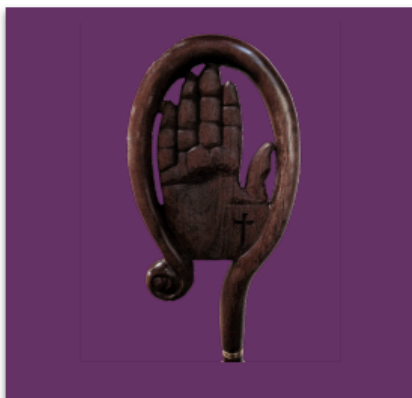
Yours in Christ,  
Pr. Nicole

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▣ Matthew 13:44-46, Matthew 18:23-35, Matthew 19:16-22, Matthew 20:1-16, Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 6:20-26, Luke 19:12-27, Luke 12:13-21, Luke 16:19-31, etc. This also does not include all the Old Testament and other New Testament references to money / possessions.

# Christmas at Hope





**North/West Lower  
Michigan Synod**

**P.O. Box 517  
Dewitt, MI 48820**

**517-321-5066  
[mittensynod.org](http://mittensynod.org)**

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## **Synod: Way Together**

The origin of the word *synod* is the combination of two Greek words: *syn* (together) and *hodos* (way, path or road, direction, manner of life, journey). *Synod* means way or road together. In the gospels, "the way" is shorthand for the way of discipleship, the way of the cross, and Jesus as the way that leads to life.

In May, we come to the regular fork in our road together, or the regular pause in our way together, that is a bishop election. We get to consider our direction and manner of life in terms of Jesus, the cross, abundant life, and discipleship. And we get to call a bishop to lead and accompany us for the next leg of the journey.

Regardless of how well orchestrated they are, changes in bishops, like changes in pastors, are disruptive. Expectation and anxiety rise as relationships change, ministry slows, at least for a time, and some aspects of our life and journey together stop. This time of transition can be especially unsettling for the staff, synod leadership, congregations in the call process, and rostered ministers seeking calls.

When we last came to this fork in the road in 2019, I endeavored to maintain our momentum and reduce anxiety by announcing my openness to continue to serve as bishop. To my regret, some received my announcement as blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Mark 3:29) because I was perceived as attempting to prevent the one the Holy Spirit wanted to serve as bishop from running. So I haven't said much about the bishop election this time. Now some ask about my openness to serving another term; others express the opinion that the time has come for a change. I am not a fan of whispering to some thoughts that might impact us all. So what should I do?

Allow me to share my three hopes for our synod assembly. First, I want the assembly to be a positive, good, even holy experience. I remain committed to direction I received from Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson that the bishop's role and responsibility at an assembly is to help the voting members do their work. Second, I do not want to tie myself up in emotional or spiritual knots over a bishop election. So I have worked and am working to be at peace whatever the outcome. I will either get to continue doing some things I love as bishop or I won't have to do some things I really don't love as bishop. Third, as I indicated in the June newsletter, I want to protect Cathy, Chelsey, and our staff from derision, both derision about me and derision directed at them. I hope Synod Council will lead us in honoring people's right to critique without dishonoring the Eighth Commandment and Luther's interpretation of it. I am bolstered by people who have promised that they will not allow derision to happen or will call a halt to it if it does.

As for the election and my openness to serving, I will do as I did in 2013 and be guided by the results of the ballots. Right after the speeches in 2013, Cathy, Chelsey, and I decided to leave the assembly and head home to Chicago. On our way out the door, the results of the third ballot turned us around. I have attended enough bishop elections in the last 12 years to trust that the triune God is at work in the process; we do well to treat it as a holy thing.

Allow me also to respond to some of the scuttlebutt floating around. I am not constitutionally prohibited from serving another term. I am neither exhausted by nor uninterested in the work. Quite the opposite. I remain energized and committed because I continue to encounter and be encountered by Jesus in my service as bishop. I am invigorated by Pastor Bright coming alongside as Assistant to the Bishop. I am profoundly grateful that Ann Stavros, Rebecca Bossenbroek, Lynn Kriser, Chelsey Satterlee, and Cathy Satterlee continue to journey with me and with our synod. I am inspired by Sandy Schlesinger's partnership and leadership of Synod Council. I am eager for our synod to call our next Director for Evangelical Mission.

As for the road ahead, I am excited by the opportunities I anticipate we will encounter, particularly when we share the story of Jesus in word and deed for no reason other than that it is such good news. I am undaunted by the challenging landscape that lies ahead, including retirements, call processes, and congregations that will need to face their sustainability and decide what, if anything, they want to do about it. All of this in a changing denomination and a changing world. And, as the pandemic taught us, the only thing certain about the next leg of the journey, for the church and for the world, is the certainty of God's love in Jesus Christ. So the most important thing we do is proclaim Christ crucified and risen as the power and wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:23-24).

And my openness to serving and my vision of the road ahead are secondary to the synod's call. When I was installed as bishop, I was asked, "Will you commit yourself to this new trust and responsibility in the confidence that it comes from God through the call of the church?" This is the same question pastors and deacons are asked when they are installed in the confidence that it comes from God through the call of the church. In the course of my life and ministry, I have known times when I was convinced that God was calling me to a specific trust and responsibility, only to have the church call someone else. In retrospect, I am grateful that God through the church did not call me. And I have been blessed beyond measure when God through the church has called me. So my question is not about my openness to serve, but about whether God through the church, meeting as a synod assembly, is calling me to serve.

If you call me, I will happily and gratefully serve. If you call someone else, I will help to prepare you for the next leg of the journey and then, grateful for the privilege of leading and accompanying you for a time, wave goodbye as I watch you head down one fork in the road and I turn to head down the other, confident that Jesus is leading us both to our common destination of discipleship, the cross, and abundant life.

So, I invite you to join me in holy waiting and fervent prayer. Pray for our synod and our way together. Pray for those who are planning and will lead our assembly and bishop election. Pray for the one whom we will call to serve as bishop. Pray especially for those who will open themselves to serve and not be called. And please remember that we do not pause on our journey until May and that we still have traveling to do as we follow in the way together.

May the peace of Christ be with us all!

The Rev. Craig Alan Satterlee, Ph.D., Bishop

## The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity



The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is celebrated from January 18 - January 25, 2025. This week brings together Christian denominations from around the world to pray that Jesus' desire that his followers be one come true (John 17:21-23). This year's theme is "Do you believe this" (John 11:26). The 1,700th Anniversary of the Nicene Creed is also being celebrated. Resources and materials for 2025 are available at <https://bit.ly/4fTBHh7>

An Ecumenical Prayer Service, co-officiated by Bishop David Bard of the United Methodist Church of Michigan, Bishop Earl Boyea of the Catholic Diocese of Lansing, and Bishop Craig Satterlee of the North/West Lower Michigan Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, will take place at University United Methodist (1120 S. Harrison, East Lansing) on Friday, January 17, at 6:30pm. All are welcome! Fellowship and refreshments will follow!

For those unable to attend in-person, the service will be live-streamed on YouTube. The livestream will begin a few minutes before 6:30pm. Watch livestream at <https://youtube.com/live/T8YCs2Ek9IE?feature=share>

## ELCA Fund for Leaders Scholarships

Each year the ELCA's Fund for Leaders awards approximately 30 full-tuition scholarships to future ELCA pastors and deacons who are planning to attend an ELCA seminary. In spring 2025, the Fund for Leaders will once again offer scholarships to ministry candidates pursuing seminary study. **The application window for full-tuition scholarships will be open from December 2, 2024, through February 21, 2025.**

Scholarships are no longer reserved for full-time students. Candidates who need to study part-time are encouraged to apply! Eligible applicants must be planning to enroll in seminary in fall 2025. Applicants must one in the process of seeking candidacy for rostered ministry in the ELCA. Learn more: <https://bit.ly/3Z4BwKN>

Application information is available at [ELCA.org/FundForLeaders](https://elca.org/FundForLeaders). Contact the Fund For Leaders Team at [fundforleaders@elca.org](mailto:fundforleaders@elca.org) or 800-638-3522 with any additional questions.

## Michigan Interfaith Power & Light

*Bishop Emeritus John Schleicher, member of the Environmental Stewardship Task Force*

A growing number of congregations in our synod are members of Michigan Interfaith Power & Light. In recent months, the work of this ministry, in partnership with Solar Faithful and other organizations, has greatly expanded. We encourage you to regularly visit their website and read its periodic blogs (<https://www.miipl.org>). Its staff, led by Leah Wiste, is available to work with your congregation, wherever you are in your environmental justice journey.

Below is an excerpt from the Energy Resources tab on their website, which discusses Michigan's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA):

"Michigan IPL is here to inspire and equip your congregation to use energy more wisely. Energy extraction, transportation, and waste have negative consequences for our health and the stability of life on Earth. Together we can make positive change to improve our communities, and create better opportunities for faith, creation and environmental justice!

A provision in new legislation, referred to as the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) allows nonprofits, places of worship, and other tax-exempt organizations to receive a 30% tax credit as a direct payment to help cover costs of certain renewable energy and energy efficiency related upgrades. Included in the IRA are clean energy tax credits for solar projects, back up battery storage, electric vehicle charging stations, geothermal heat pumps, and weatherization, such as insulation."

Additional information on the Inflation Reduction Act is available at <https://interfaithpowerandlight.org/federal-funding/>.

To learn more about Creation Care, contact our synod's Environmental Stewardship Task Force through their chair, Pastor Paul Busekist at [paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org](mailto:paul.busekist@bethlehemtc.org).

## National Day of Racial Healing

The 2025 National Day of Racial Healing is an annual observance that follows Martin Luther King Jr. Day. This year, the ELCA will join the movement of racial healing for our church and the nation.

On January 21, from 11:00am - 3:00pm ET, join the ELCA for a free online educational event that centers the voices of ELCA leaders of color. This event is open to all ELCA rostered ministers, lay leaders and members, as well as the church's affiliate organizations and ecumenical and interreligious partners.

Learn more at <https://bit.ly/3DSKz9z>

## Synod Financial Summary - November 2024

Financial Position Indicators		11/30/24		11/30/23					
Cash (Comerica and MIF Checking)		230,798		487,268					
Investments (CDs and Money Market Account)		674,412		460,018					
Cash Flow Reserve Fund (NTE 16% of subsequent year budgeted expenses)		200,710		14,620					
Book Net Worth (Fund Balance - All Funds)		3,533,008		3,213,062					
<b>Unrestricted-Undesignated Fund Activity (General Operating Fund)</b>									
		Current Year				Prior Year			
		November		Year to Date		November		Year to Date	
		Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget	Actual	Budget
Mission Support Revenue (50% goes to ELCA Churchwide)		111,100	101,079	997,820	1,010,790	129,408	110,000	1,007,506	1,100,000
Synod Assembly Revenue		0	0	4,920	5,000	0	0	40,550	60,000
Other Revenue		4,888	3,269	93,035	59,440	2,677	3,444	64,846	69,690
<b>Total Revenue</b>		<b>115,988</b>	<b>104,348</b>	<b>1,095,775</b>	<b>1,075,230</b>	<b>132,085</b>	<b>113,444</b>	<b>1,112,902</b>	<b>1,229,690</b>
Churchwide Proportionate Share (50%)		55,550	50,540	498,910	505,400	64,704	55,000	503,753	550,000
Synod Assembly Expenses		0	0	5,642	5,000	0	0	54,655	60,000
Other Expenses		61,382	60,602	630,779	605,873	68,788	62,506	561,273	656,343
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>116,932</b>	<b>111,142</b>	<b>1,135,331</b>	<b>1,116,273</b>	<b>133,492</b>	<b>117,506</b>	<b>1,119,681</b>	<b>1,266,343</b>
Net Change to Fund Balance (Revenue less Expenses)		(944)	(6,794)	(39,556)	(41,043)	(1,407)	(4,062)	(6,778)	(36,653)
Transfers as directed by Synod Council		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Beginning Fund Balance		108,128		146,740		503,954		509,326	
<b>Ending Fund Balance (at 11/30/24 &amp; 11/30/23)</b>		<b>107,184</b>		<b>107,184</b>		<b>502,548</b>		<b>502,548</b>	

Other Fund Balances			
Unrestricted-Designated*		1,052,395	616,258
Temporarily-Restricted Endowment-Related**		1,016,324	776,758
Temporarily-Restricted		321,558	314,951
Permanently-Restricted		1,035,547	1,002,547
<b>Total Fund Balances at 10/31/24 &amp; 10/31/23</b>		<b>3,533,008</b>	<b>3,213,062</b>

\*Includes Synod Endowment Fund, Cash Flow Reserve, Synod Staff Support Fund

\*\*Reflects unrealized gains/losses on investments and unspent distributions

## Upcoming Events

January 15	Deadline for Synod Assembly Interest Forms	Learn more: <a href="http://bit.ly/3E6VYzP">http://bit.ly/3E6VYzP</a>
January 17	Ecumenical Prayer Service for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	Learn more: <a href="https://bit.ly/4h4rXBM">https://bit.ly/4h4rXBM</a>
January 18-25	The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity	Learn more: <a href="https://bit.ly/4fTBHh7">https://bit.ly/4fTBHh7</a>
January 18	You Are Witnesses Youth Retreat	Learn more: <a href="https://bit.ly/4gtor3x">https://bit.ly/4gtor3x</a>
January 23	2025 ELCA Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza	Learn more: <a href="https://bit.ly/4iAWR66">https://bit.ly/4iAWR66</a>
February 6	Boundary Training for Rostered Ministers	Learn more: <a href="https://bit.ly/3Wc2nT9">https://bit.ly/3Wc2nT9</a>
February 7-8	Peer Ministry Leadership Training	Learn more: <a href="https://bit.ly/3ZQJisc">https://bit.ly/3ZQJisc</a>

Note: We include congregations on the public list when the called pastor or rostered leader completes her or his ministry in the congregation. Thus, congregations in which the pastor has resigned but is still serving are not listed here. We also do not post calls that are accepted until Bishop Satterlee signs the Letter of Call.

<b>Bay Conference</b>	<b>Pastor Emily Olsen-Brandt, Dean</b>	<b>Kalamazoo Conference</b>	<b>Pastor Travis Wilson, Dean</b>
		Messiah/Constantine	Stated Supply / Interviewing
		Saron/St. Joseph	Supply Pastors / Interviewing
<b>Capital Area Conference</b>	<b>Pastor Neil Brady, Dean</b>	<b>Stony Lake Conference</b>	<b>Pastor Sarah Samuelson, Dean</b>
Grace/Lansing	Pastor Brian Schneider-Thomas, Interim		
Faith/Okemos	CALL ACCEPTED: Megan Floyd, Ordination February 1; Installation February 2	<b>Sunrise Conference</b>	<b>Pastor Megan Crouch, Dean</b>
<b>Greater Grand Rapids Conference</b>	<b>Pastor Julie Schneider-Thomas, Pastor Kate Van Valkenburg, Co-Deans</b>	New Life/Alcona County	Supply Pastors / Seeking Candidates
Settlement/Gowan	Discerning Future	St. Paul/Alpena	Seeking a part-time assistant pastor
Mamrelund/Kent City	Supply Pastors / Seeking Candidates	<b>Traverse Conference</b>	<b>Pastor Jonathan Reid, Dean</b>
Two Churches/Kentwood	Episcopal Church taking lead in transition		
Zion/Woodland	Supply Pastors / Interviewing		

### *Council Meeting*

The next council meeting is on Tuesday, February 18 at 6:00 p.m. at Hope. Have questions about council or it's meetings? Please speak with a council representative: Nancy Gregory, Marne Sieber, Veronica Johnson, Roxy Reed, Karen Crane, Sandy Hodge, or Pr. Nicole.

### Hope Lutheran Church Council Highlights

**December 17, 2024**

The last Council Meeting of 2024 took place at the home of Chuck and Nancy Gregory. Business was conducted, followed by a nice dinner and fellowship.

### Stewardship Message

January 2025



## Stewardship Message for January 2025

Happy New Year!

In looking at the Financial Secretary's report for 2024, October was an EXTREMELY good month for giving. Giving for the entire year of 2024 was more than in 2023, 2022, and 2021. Hooray for us!!!

### Earth Tips

Environmental good news to give you January hope!

Because we have a special relationship with Guatemala, we can rejoice that deforestation in the Guatemalan mountains is being eradicated. The Arbor Day Foundation and the Nature Conservancy have combined forces to help the Guatemalan government and 12 local Mayan groups to plant more than 200,000 trees in parts of the mountains that have been deforested. This will prevent further erosion, restore an important part of the culture of the area, and prevent temperature escalation and drought.

And in Michigan, Solar Faithful, Feeding America and Interfaith Power and Light have been awarded two 20 million dollar grants, one for work in Detroit and one for work in Benton Harbor. The agencies will organize and make possible sustainable power for churches that serve their communities with food banks and soup kitchens. In Benton Harbor, this means that 94 buildings will be made into resilience hubs – equipped with more efficient power sources and equipped so that, if there is a power outage, they will be able to serve as a source of power, food and warmth. What is amazing to me about this is that each building will be able to run off of a fully charged electric vehicle for five days via bidirectional charging!

I've mentioned Solar Faithful several times before. In their two years of existence, they have helped almost 100 churches in Michigan be financially able to install solar power. These projects in Detroit and Benton Harbor are a new direction for them, though they will still be working with churches as well.

## FREE STUFF

1) If you are a hard-of-hearing senior, you are eligible for a closed-caption phone free of charge. These phones enable you to read what the other person is saying, just as on a closed-caption TV. The program is run by the U.S. government and is totally free. They bring the phone to your home, install it, and teach you how to use it. There are two strings attached: you must have a computer or other device that they can hook it up to because they need to monitor minutes of usage (no, they don't actually listen to your calls); you must also arrange for someone to return the device when you die.

Bill had one of these and it allowed him to make calls more easily. If you are interested, ask your audiologist to arrange for it.

2) On a personal note, I have a Christian belt buckle for a 1-1.5 inch belt that I would like to give someone if they want it. See me in church or give me a call.

Pat Vance

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRAYER AT HOPE

**Prayer Chain** - this Prayer List is for Urgent or Special requests for prayer. This list is confidential. To be listed in the prayer chain please contact Judi Gage.

**In Our Prayers List** - this list is for general or on-going needs for prayer. It is published in the worship bulletins. They are also read out loud during worship. Please make sure the person / persons you want prayed for have given their permission to be listed and are aware our services are streamed online. To be listed in our prayer list please contact Pr. Nicole.

**Tuesday Bible Study Prayer List** - The Tuesday Bible Study Group meets at Hope at 9:30 am and prays for various prayer requests. To be listed in the Tuesday bible study prayers please contact Judi Gage or Pat Vance.

## Giving to Hope Lutheran Church

At Hope we seek to grow in our faith in Jesus Christ and to share the good news of

Jesus Christ in our community and world. This happens because of the faithful giving of so many. Thank you so much for your support!

### **Give by Check**

Checks made out to Hope Lutheran may be safely sent to:

**Hope Lutheran Church**

**290 12th Street, Plainwell, MI 49080**

### **Need Giving Envelopes?**

**Contact Keith Gage**

### **Give Online**

Give safe and securely with PayPal! Simply scan the QR Code below and you will be directed through making an online donation to Hope.



**Christian Neighbors**

### Items We Always Need Are:

- Oatmeal
- Jelly
- Pancake Mix
- Pancake Syrup
- Instant Mashed Potatoes
- Applesauce
- Canned Fruit
- Snack Items (chips, pretzels, granola bars, etc.)
- Canned Ravioli
- Women's Deodorant
- Items for those with dietary needs: low sodium, no sugar added, sugar free, gluten free, vegan.



**FEED THE  
HUNGRY**

Hope's items for Christian Neighbors for February are: Canned Soups and Ramen Noodles.

# December Financial Report

<b>THE MONTHLY REPORT OF THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY</b>		<b>DECEMBER 2024</b>		
GENERAL FUND	THIS MONTH	YEAR TO DATE	LAST YEAR TO DATE	CHANGE
GENERAL FUND	\$6,965.00	\$84,237.41	\$75,425.55	\$8,811.86
LOOSE OFFERING	\$113.00	\$444.38	\$325.48	\$118.90
<b>GENERAL FUND TOTALS</b>	<b>\$7,078.00</b>	<b>\$84,681.79</b>	<b>\$75,751.03</b>	<b>\$8,930.76</b>

DESIGNATED GIVING	THIS MONTH	YEAR TO DATE	LAST YEAR TO DATE	CHANGE
ADMINISTRATING EUCHARIST	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00
AV EQUIPMENT	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$100.00
BASEBALL TICKETS	\$0.00	\$32.00	\$0.00	\$32.00
BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS	\$0.00	\$50.00	\$50.00	\$0.00
CAPITAL FUNDS	\$20.00	\$40.00	\$0.00	\$40.00
COMMUNION WINE	\$0.00	\$140.00	\$140.00	\$0.00
FLOWER FUND	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10.00	-\$10.00
FUNERAL FUND	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$143.00	-\$143.00
KITCHEN FUND	\$0.00	\$481.00	\$0.00	\$481.00
LEAF BLOWER	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$102.00	-\$102.00
MEMORIAL	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,615.00	-\$1,615.00
OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$0.00	\$35.00	\$5.00	\$30.00
PASTORAL HOME EQUITY	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
PASTORAL TRAVEL EXPENSES	\$0.00	\$650.00	\$0.00	\$650.00
PASTORAL VISITING	\$0.00	\$1,450.00	\$0.00	\$1,450.00
RETREAT	\$0.00	\$2,570.00	\$1,859.00	\$711.00
SUNDAY SCHOOL/CHRISTIAN EDUCATIO	\$1.00	\$83.53	\$56.05	\$27.48
STAFF GIFTS	\$950.00	\$1,350.00	\$1,050.00	\$300.00
STUDYING EUCHARIST	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$250.00
TORNADO RELIEF	\$0.00	\$175.00	\$0.00	\$175.00
ZOO TRIP	\$0.00	\$516.25	\$0.00	\$516.25
<b>DESIGNATED GIVING TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,471.00</b>	<b>\$8,672.78</b>	<b>\$5,030.05</b>	<b>\$3,642.73</b>

EXTERNAL MINISTRIES	THIS MONTH	YEAR TO DATE	LAST YEAR TO DATE	CHANGE
CHRISTIAN NEIGHBORS	\$60.00	\$3,455.87	\$3,026.05	\$429.82
CROP WALK	\$0.00	\$10.00	\$0.00	\$10.00
ELCA FUND LEADERS	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10.00	-\$10.00
GOOD HANDS PLAINWELL	\$50.00	\$500.00	\$300.00	\$200.00
LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$798.34	-\$698.34
NOISY OFFERING	\$10.30	\$97.65	\$87.23	\$10.42
PROJECT HOPE XICHIUAN (GSF)	\$0.00	\$550.56	\$675.00	-\$124.44
SYLVIA'S PLACE	\$50.00	\$500.00	\$265.00	\$235.00
SYNOD DEBT ASSISTANCE	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$12.00	-\$12.00
WINGS OF HOPE	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$12.00	-\$12.00
<b>EXTERNAL MINISTRIES TOTAL</b>	<b>\$270.30</b>	<b>\$5,214.08</b>	<b>\$5,185.62</b>	<b>\$28.46</b>

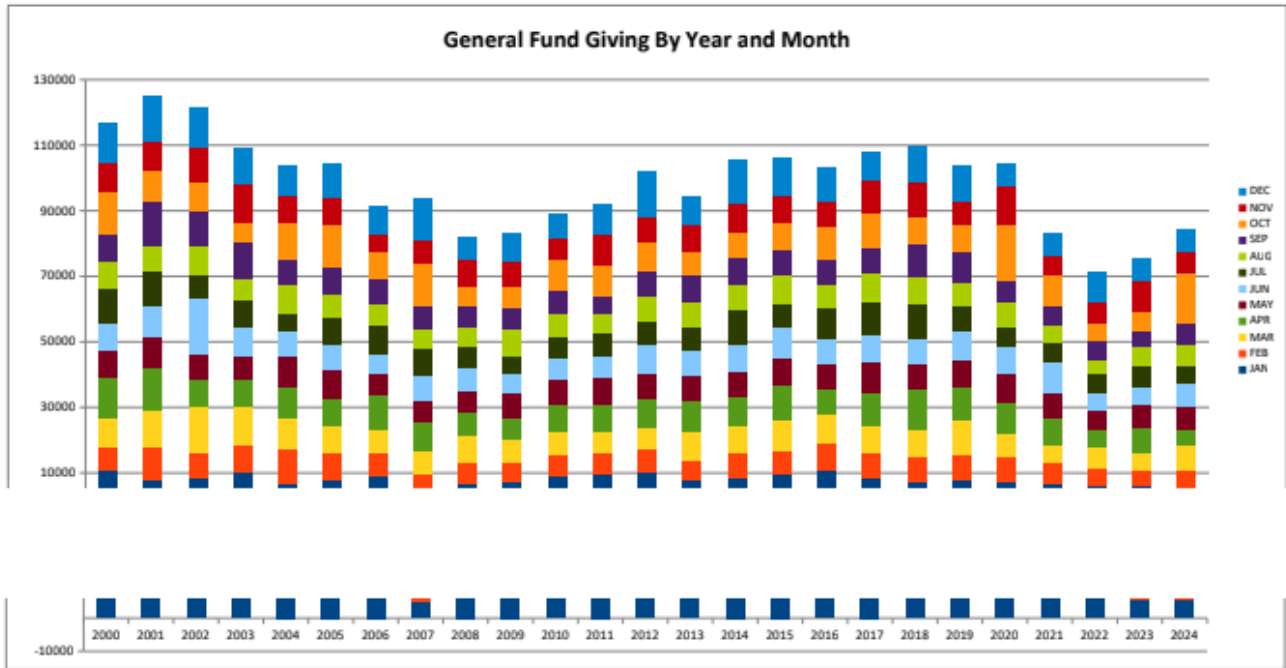
3.18% PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL GIVING DESIGNATED FOR EXTERNAL MINISTRIES

OTHER REVENUE	THIS MONTH	YEAR TO DATE	LAST YEAR TO DATE	CHANGE
REFUND	\$0.00	\$2,067.25	\$203.29	\$1,863.96
THRIVENT	\$0.00	\$24.00	\$0.00	\$24.00
<b>NON GIVING TOTAL</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$2,091.25</b>	<b>\$203.29</b>	<b>\$1,887.96</b>

<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>	<b>\$8,819.30</b>	<b>\$100,659.90</b>	<b>\$86,169.99</b>	<b>\$14,489.91</b>
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		Monthly Average	Weekly Average
General Fund Giving Past 12 Months:	\$84,237.41	\$7,019.78	\$1,619.95

TOTAL NUMBER OF DONATIONS	60	667	683	-16
NUMBER OF DIFFERENT DONORS	26	46	62	-16



General Giving (Non Designated) By Month													
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
2000	\$10,537.00	\$7,422.00	\$8,843.00	\$12,217.00	\$8,516.00	\$8,956.00	\$10,577.00	\$8,272.00	\$8,386.00	\$11,283.00	\$8,453.00	\$12,316.99	\$116,788.99
2001	\$8,108.00	\$9,615.00	\$11,418.00	\$12,982.00	\$9,473.90	\$9,176.04	\$11,092.00	\$7,790.00	\$13,072.50	\$9,414.00	\$9,288.00	\$13,368.25	\$125,296.60
2002	\$8,659.09	\$7,701.00	\$13,860.00	\$8,212.00	\$7,778.00	\$17,184.80	\$7,502.24	\$8,303.00	\$11,111.88	\$8,517.37	\$10,394.52	\$12,208.64	\$121,346.94
2003	\$9,888.86	\$8,653.00	\$11,717.13	\$8,165.38	\$7,113.00	\$8,459.72	\$8,585.00	\$6,621.54	\$11,000.75	\$6,324.01	\$11,519.96	\$11,842.91	\$109,096.28
2004	\$6,578.00	\$10,345.88	\$8,339.00	\$9,435.48	\$9,728.87	\$7,721.40	\$4,813.43	\$9,397.09	\$7,715.00	\$18,642.78	\$8,367.00	\$9,213.00	\$103,736.73
2005	\$7,712.00	\$8,417.34	\$8,581.34	\$8,055.00	\$9,042.30	\$7,173.48	\$8,622.48	\$7,210.00	\$8,306.34	\$12,865.00	\$8,343.82	\$10,871.46	\$104,077.72
2006	\$8,877.80	\$6,916.00	\$7,674.00	\$10,177.92	\$6,616.00	\$6,340.00	\$8,366.83	\$6,829.00	\$7,360.65	\$8,424.24	\$5,595.00	\$8,343.00	\$91,516.44
2007	\$4,721.29	\$5,130.58	\$7,119.36	\$8,335.00	\$7,072.71	\$7,230.00	\$8,308.50	\$6,035.40	\$7,260.00	\$12,581.51	\$7,374.39	\$12,630.00	\$93,695.53
2008	\$6,518.00	\$6,858.64	\$9,073.30	\$7,018.28	\$6,334.00	\$7,347.00	\$6,621.26	\$5,680.00	\$6,569.86	\$6,039.80	\$8,136.80	\$6,559.00	\$81,722.34
2009	\$7,142.80	\$5,880.00	\$7,128.00	\$6,738.00	\$7,658.00	\$5,547.00	\$5,678.00	\$8,151.30	\$6,422.99	\$6,343.88	\$8,875.32	\$8,700.34	\$83,468.93
2010	\$9,244.00	\$6,615.05	\$6,671.00	\$8,255.30	\$7,844.00	\$6,103.13	\$6,875.00	\$7,170.00	\$6,524.25	\$9,793.00	\$6,541.00	\$7,395.00	\$89,132.73
2011	\$9,537.00	\$6,696.00	\$6,461.00	\$8,243.00	\$8,335.00	\$6,562.00	\$6,802.42	\$6,026.00	\$5,139.00	\$9,886.00	\$8,396.00	\$9,161.00	\$91,844.42
2012	\$10,257.00	\$6,828.00	\$6,413.44	\$9,216.00	\$7,588.46	\$8,881.00	\$7,216.00	\$7,258.82	\$8,649.00	\$8,895.00	\$7,885.00	\$13,790.00	\$102,072.72
2013	\$7,561.28	\$6,374.00	\$8,962.00	\$9,068.00	\$7,628.35	\$8,076.00	\$6,788.00	\$7,407.00	\$8,634.00	\$7,383.00	\$7,811.42	\$8,842.00	\$94,525.05
2014	\$8,301.00	\$7,489.50	\$8,714.00	\$8,571.00	\$7,816.00	\$8,350.00	\$10,324.00	\$7,913.56	\$8,135.00	\$7,617.00	\$8,886.00	\$13,855.20	\$105,272.26
2015	\$9,593.22	\$7,186.00	\$8,208.25	\$10,580.00	\$8,603.00	\$9,334.00	\$6,890.00	\$9,112.00	\$7,586.00	\$7,826.00	\$8,377.00	\$11,534.00	\$106,380.47
2016	\$10,874.00	\$7,751.00	\$8,356.00	\$7,316.87	\$7,884.52	\$7,477.28	\$9,593.77	\$6,811.00	\$8,221.24	\$9,746.43	\$7,260.00	\$10,529.00	\$103,008.11
2017	\$8,291.19	\$7,953.21	\$8,012.00	\$9,961.15	\$9,776.44	\$8,175.12	\$9,327.38	\$9,211.28	\$7,799.00	\$18,425.01	\$8,773.00	\$8,781.17	\$107,896.34
2018	\$7,468.00	\$7,122.00	\$12,354.05	\$8,122.00	\$7,116.82	\$10,077.00	\$8,499.19	\$9,887.00	\$8,634.00	\$10,165.36	\$11,876.44	\$10,731.86	\$109,731.86
2019	\$7,988.00	\$7,712.00	\$10,469.00	\$9,865.00	\$8,378.00	\$8,505.00	\$8,301.89	\$6,715.00	\$9,355.00	\$8,501.00	\$8,886.30	\$10,638.99	\$103,638.99
2020	\$7,616.00	\$7,173.00	\$7,383.00	\$9,193.34	\$9,005.00	\$7,725.00	\$6,490.00	\$7,100.00	\$6,784.40	\$17,284.91	\$11,581.00	\$6,904.00	\$104,458.24
2021	\$6,758.00	\$6,715.00	\$4,996.00	\$8,553.70	\$7,461.00	\$9,278.00	\$5,831.00	\$5,415.00	\$5,740.91	\$9,820.00	\$5,613.37	\$6,495.00	\$82,888.98
2022	\$6,171.19	\$5,399.00	\$6,294.00	\$5,276.00	\$5,741.54	\$5,558.00	\$5,775.00	\$4,395.00	\$5,485.00	\$5,360.00	\$6,911.63	\$9,270.00	\$71,516.36
2023	\$5,715.00	\$5,229.00	\$4,987.00	\$7,893.15	\$6,826.40	\$5,575.00	\$6,647.00	\$5,679.00	\$4,940.00	\$5,570.00	\$6,683.00	\$6,761.00	\$75,425.55
2024	\$5,231.00	\$5,279.06	\$8,073.66	\$4,536.00	\$6,992.25	\$7,550.80	\$4,896.00	\$6,442.50	\$6,856.00	\$15,231.74	\$6,235.40	\$6,965.00	\$84,237.41

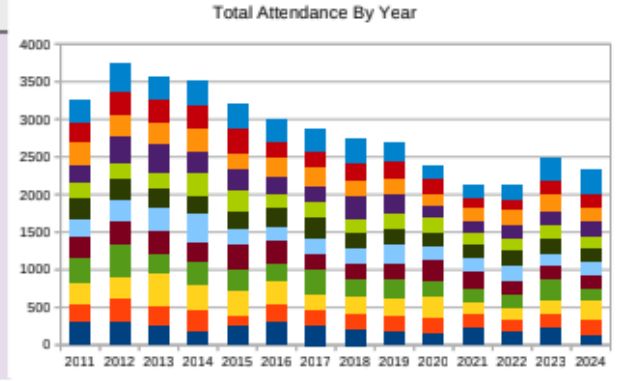
Highest Month: \$17,264.98 October 2020  
 Lowest Month: \$4,395.00 January 2007 & August 2022

**Last Month's Attendance**

December 1, 2024	44	Last Month's Total Attendance:	331		
December 8, 2024	48	Last Year Same Month:	286		
December 15, 2024	68	Year To Date Attendance:	2343		
December 22, 2024	50	Last Year To Date Attendance:	2479		
December 29, 2024	35	Change From Last Year:	-136		
December 24, 2024	86				
Average Per Week:					
Last Month:	66.2	Year To Date:	45.1	2023 Year Average:	
Last Year-Same Month:	57.2	Last Year To Date:	46.8		46.8

2000's GENERAL GIVING BY YEAR		
		Change from Previous Year
2000	\$116,788.99	
2001	\$125,296.69	7.28%
2002	\$121,340.95	-3.16%
2003	\$109,090.26	-10.10%
2004	\$103,730.73	-4.91%
2005	\$104,077.72	0.33%
2006	\$93,510.44	-12.07%
2007	\$93,695.53	2.39%
2008	\$81,722.34	-12.78%
2009	\$83,468.93	2.14%
2010	\$89,132.73	6.79%
2011	\$91,844.42	3.04%
2012	\$102,072.72	11.14%
2013	\$94,525.05	-7.39%
2014	\$105,272.26	11.37%
2015	\$106,381.47	1.05%
2016	\$103,009.11	-3.17%
2017	\$107,896.34	4.74%
2018	\$109,731.86	1.71%
2019	\$103,639.99	-5.55%
2020	\$104,450.24	0.78%
2021	\$82,800.98	-20.73%
2022	\$71,516.36	-13.63%
2023	\$75,425.55	5.47%
2024	\$84,237.41	11.68%

Current Pace For This Year (General Giving): \$84,237.41



**Have Something for the Newsletter?**

Articles are due each month on the 10th. If you will be submitting pictures please make sure you have the person/persons permission to do so.

**Email: [media.hopeplainwell@gmail.com](mailto:media.hopeplainwell@gmail.com)**

# February 2025 Calendar

SUN 26	MON 27	TUE 28	WED 29	THU 30	FRI 31	SAT Feb 1
<p>Rev. Nicole Smith</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:30am Worship</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30am Bible Study</li> </ul>				
<p>2</p> <p>Rev. Nicole Smith</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:30am Worship</li> </ul>	<p>3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Coffee with Vets</li> <li>9:30am Bible Study</li> <li>3pm Men's Bible Study</li> </ul>	<p>4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9am Coffee with Vets</li> <li>9:30am Bible Study</li> <li>3pm Men's Bible Study</li> </ul>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>
<p>9</p> <p>Rev. Nicole Smith</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:30am Worship</li> </ul>	<p>10</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:30am News Articles Du</li> </ul>	<p>11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30am Bible Study</li> </ul>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>
<p>16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stewardship Pot Luck</li> </ul> <p>Rev. Nicole Smith</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:30am Worship</li> </ul>	<p>17</p>	<p>18</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30am Bible Study</li> <li>6pm Council meeting</li> </ul>	<p>19</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>	<p>22</p>
<p>23</p> <p>Rev. Nicole Smith</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10:30am Worship</li> </ul>	<p>24</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30am Bible Study</li> </ul>	<p>25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9:30am Bible Study</li> </ul>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>Mar 1</p> <p>St. David's Day</p>



## **HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH**

**Sunday School:** (all ages) 9:15 A.M. (no classes during the summer months)

**Worship:** Sundays at 10:30 A.M. in person and on Facebook Live

**Mailing Address:** 290 12th Street, Plainwell, MI 49080

**Phone:** 269-685-1348

**Office email:** [office.hopeplainwell@gmail.com](mailto:office.hopeplainwell@gmail.com)

**Pastor Email:** [hoperlutheranpastor@gmail.com](mailto:hoperlutheranpastor@gmail.com)

**Webpage:** [hopeplainwell.org](http://hopeplainwell.org)

**Hope's Facebook page:** <https://www.facebook.com/HopeLutheranPlainwellMI>

**Pastoral Office Hours:** Tuesday 10 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 9-noon; Wednesday 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.,

and Thursday 4:15 p.m. - 7:15 p.m.