



# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

Concordia Lutheran Church Kirkwood



# ***“God has remembered His steadfast love and faithfulness”*** (Psalm 98:3)

In 2023, Concordia proved that sharing our faith and growing our relationships with one another continued to be at the forefront of our church family. With a full staff in 2023, we were able to grow our student ministry, welcome members of our special needs community in-person for Night to Shine, hosted VBS, supported a weekly worship service in our Sanctuary for Holy Cross Deaf Ministry, and so much more. The mission of Concordia continued to reach beyond our church walls. The secondary school in Kawete, Uganda is well on its way. Our Men’s Ministry served 1,000 families with the Turkey Blessing, and we continue to identify needs both near and far.



## ***Concordia's Church Council Members***

- Keith Fatzinger, President
- Carl Bradshaw, VP
- Matt Bayes, Secretary
- Kerry Pozaric, Treasurer
- Liz Wingenbach, At Large Member
- Andy Wagner, At Large Member
- Jerry Schmidt, At Large Member
- Liz Wingenbach, At Large Member
- Jen Pawlitz, At Large Member
- John Willerton, At Large Member
- April Maldonado, At Large Member
- Larry Watson, Church Business Administrator
- Pastor Stephen Bongard
- Pastor David Meggers

# Concordia Staff

Leadership Team



Rev. Steven Bongard  
Senior Pastor



Rev. David Meggers  
Associate Pastor  
for Adult Ministries



Rev. Brandon Larson  
Associate Pastor  
for Student Ministries



Brendan Knorp  
Director for Worship Arts



Deaconess Kristina Paul  
Connections Coordinator  
Kid's Ministry Coordinator



Larry Watson  
Church Business Administrator



Carolyn Rusnak  
Director for Sanctuary Worship



Katie Killian  
Director for Worship Arts  
Kids and Students



Sharon Ema  
Director for Healing Arts



Rev. Ron Roma  
Pastoral Assistant



Jodi Carlson  
Student Ministry



Grace Koehn  
Student Ministry



Debbie Davis  
Director for Pre Cana



Marcy Scholl  
Newcomer Coordinator

# Concordia Staff



Sharon Karleskint  
Administrative Assistant



Kassandra Schario  
Director of Communications



Stacy Knorp  
Media Specialist



Patty Wilson  
Printing & Logistics



Kirk Lowry  
Facilities



Barry Hirth  
Facilities



Greg Geisler  
Facilities



Paul Murdick  
AV Director



Christian Rempel  
Worship Producer



Dee Leible  
Technology



Rev. Ken Krueger  
Pastoral Assistant



Rev. Dr. Richard LaBore  
Pastoral Assistant

# **RENEW Hearts**

While it may be impossible to measure renewed hearts, here is some data on how Concordia is engaging people in following Jesus.

## Worship Attendance Weekly Average

	<b>In Person</b>	<b>Online</b>
<b>2022</b>	607	worship averages
<b>2023</b>	653	186 viewers each week

**42**

BAPTISMS

41 Children and Infants + 1 Adult

New children and adults are welcomed on their journey with Jesus as God claims them as his own children in Holy Baptism. (Matthew 28:18-20)

**94**

NEW MEMBERS

We welcomed 94 new members!

We celebrate 37 new families, including 94 individuals at Concordia!

**9**

WEDDINGS

9 couples joined in holy matrimony

Couples married at Concordia, completing Pre Cana marriage preparation sessions.

**15**

DEATHS

15 deaths

Grieving families receive the care and prayers of the Concordia community.

**28**

CONFIRMED

28 individuals confirmed

After completing 6th, 7th, and 8th grade confirmation instruction, 9th graders are confirmed on Reformation Sunday of their first year in high school.

# **RENEW Ministries**

**Here's sampling of the sort of renewal God worked among us in 2023.**

- Turkey Blessing
- Holy Cross Church for the Deaf
- Vacation Bible School served 124 children
- Night to Shine was back in person and served 130 honored guests
- Sunday School
- Kids Night
- Servant Trip for HS Youth (including Trivia Night and Car Wash fundraisers)
- Farewell Tour - Alumni event
- District Youth Gathering
- Inaugural Father & Daughter Dance
- Ageless Generations: Many collections for the community
- Bethlehem Lutheran Church partnership & CCLS Micro School (Friendship soup from VBS collection, Advent wreaths, and coat drive.)
- Jr. Worship Arts Camp
- Family Fellowship on the Playground
- CK Women - many events
- Men's Ministry: Carbs & Guitars (8,500 attend this community event)
- Student Ministry: Faith & Film, Worship & Word, High School Bible Study, and more!



# **RENEW** *Campus*



In September, in conjunction with the 50th anniversary celebration of CCLS, we hosted a farewell to the old school building. Alumni and friends were invited to take one last walk through the old building and remember the blessings God gave through the learning and faith development that happened there over the years.

## ***Building Committee:***

- Lisa Sombart
- Pete Joyce
- Bill Yearout
- Kirk Lowry
- Larry Watson
- Pastor Bongard

The Building Committee was busy throughout the year. Asbestos abatement began. We reduced the scope of the project based on anticipated finances. Beginning in January 2024, much more work will be happening. We anticipate the facility improvement project to be done by November of 2024.



# **GROW** *Disciples*

In anticipation of the completion of the two-year Emerge initiative, we used the Congregation Assessment Tool (CAT) to let every voice at Concordia be heard as we plan for the future. We learned from the CAT that Concordia is a transformational church, with high energy and high satisfaction. Priorities moving forward are relationships, equipping, and growth in outreach. We used the CAT, along with conversations and prayers in smaller groups, including our Council and staff, to develop a renewed vision, mission, and re-statement of our core values. You can find these on page 12 of this report.

## *Students*

Concordia has always been dedicated to offering an enthusiastic youth ministry. The dedication to revitalize this program and the involvement of youth of all ages is a priority for many members and staff alike.

-  26.5% of our Operating Budget was allocated to support parochial education
-  18 students attended LCMS Missouri District Youth Gathering in March
-  17 students participated in a Servant Trip to Alabama & Tennessee in June
-  Weekly High School Student Ministry Activities were added on Sundays
-  36 Sixth Graders enrolled in Concordia Confirmation in August
-  Youth Ministry was re-branded as Student Ministry for clarity for new families with Middle School, High School, and College Students
-  Established a framework for creating new small group Bible studies, new groups launching in 2024

## **GO** *to Local Neighbors*

Night to Shine was back in person! 130 honored guests, their families, and approximately 300 volunteers — many of which had no prior connection to Concordia.

Our Student Ministry ventured through the community for Random Acts of Kindness. They left notes inspired by God's love, small gifts, flowers, and even detergent at the laundry mat.

A lively and festive multi-generational group strolled through Downtown Kirkwood singing Christmas carols in December.

Vacation Bible School is a wonderful way to invite young members of the community to our church to experience the message of Jesus through a week of fun, games, songs, and fellowship. This year, we also hosted a family night where all parents and siblings were invited to a fun evening with an inflatable obstacle course, games, music, snacks, and more!

We continued to further connections with Bethlehem in North St. Louis and various other service events to benefit our neighborhoods.

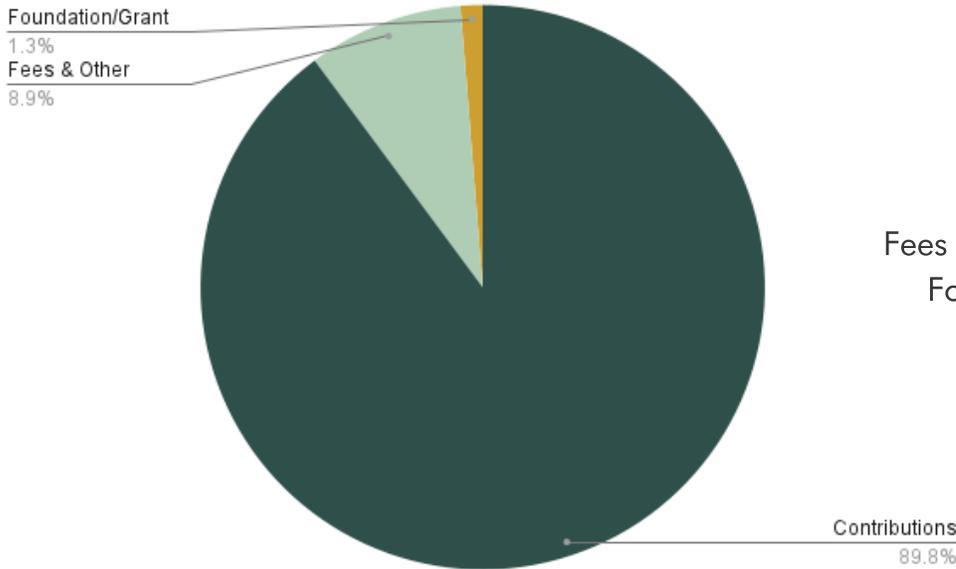
## **GO** *International Neighbors*

The Uganda Trip blessed the people of Kawete with so much love and medical care. The team was thrilled to see the progress on the Secondary School and what it will mean for those who are able to continue their education thanks to the generation of our members and donors.

 **emerge**  
*with one heart*



# 2023 Financial Report

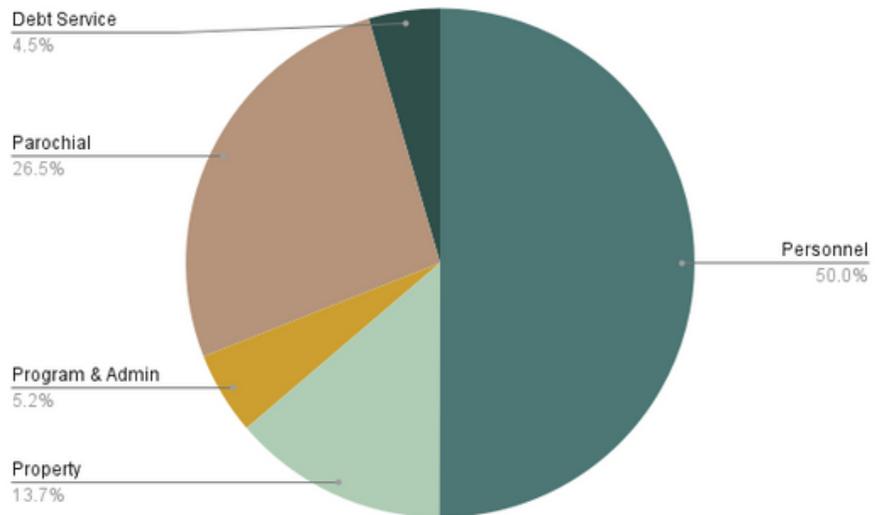


## 2023 Revenue

Contributions	\$2,426,540
Fees & Other Income	\$240,312
Foundation/Grant	\$34,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$2,700,852</b>

## 2023 Expenses

Personnel	\$1,350,837
Property	\$370,071
Program & Admin	\$141,569
Parochial Education	\$713,957
Debt Service	\$122,570
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,699,004</b>



Ended 2023 with a \$1,848 operating budget surplus.

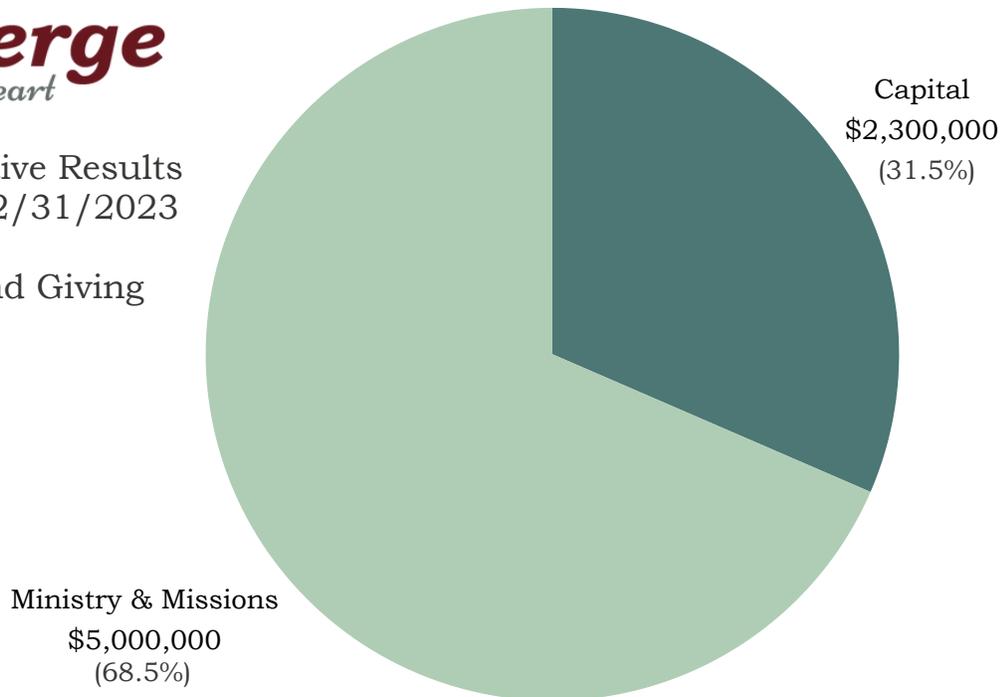
# Generosity

Thank you, Concordia, for your generous giving throughout the Emerge initiative! Generosity is one way that the love of Jesus comes to life. It's a tangible way to express thanks to God, to turn us from self-focus to service, and to fill us with the cheerful joy of doing things together that we could not accomplish individually.



Emergence Initiative Results  
1/1/2022 - 12/31/2023

Total One Fund Giving  
\$7,300,000



Over the past two years our congregation Emerged with one heart to Renew, Grow and Go. We've completed the two-year Emerge giving initiative which inspired us to fully fund on-going ministry, missions, and provide \$2.3M in capital funding for renovating our facilities. We are planning the following renovations in 2024:

- Removing the old school building providing green space
- Build rooftop patio
- Upgrade facility exterior
- Facility wide upgraded fire suppression and fire detection system
- New carpeting in atrium stairwell, Concordia Commons, Sanctuary Commons and rooftop entry
- New ceilings, lighting and paint throughout the construction area
- Updated HVAC units

Moving forward into our 150th Anniversary year in 2024, we'll continue the One Fund approach. All gifts will go to support all that we do - ongoing ministry and missions. Please prayerfully consider your generosity and give as God has blessed you as an expression of Love Alive.

*Our Vision:*  *Love Alive*

Concordia is a church alive with the love of Jesus.

*Our Mission:*

**Love God.**

Live all of life  
in relationship  
with God.

**Love one  
another.**

Connect across  
generations in  
Christ.

**Love our  
neighbors.**

Go to others with  
God's life-  
transforming  
love.

*Our Core Values: Christ-Centered*

**Worship  
Inspired**

**Relationally  
connected  
across  
generations.**

**Neighborly**

**Generous**

**Our staff and Council have developed a strategic plan to guide us to fulfilling our vision and mission and core values.**

## *Strategic Objectives:*

### ***Build.***

Build connections and relationships across generations alive with the love of Jesus.

### ***Equip.***

Identify, recruit, train, and empower people to serve both within and outside Concordia.

### ***Grow***

Reach new people with God's love and connect them with life in the church. Everyone growing in faith and love.

### ***Be generous.***

Fully fund operations, outreach, and capital. Lower debt.

### ***Sustain***

***great space for ministry.***

Our facilities honor God and our neighbors and welcome newcomers.

**Our strategic plan includes specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals to move us toward accomplishing each objective.**



# 2024

*is our 150th year  
as a congregation!*

*Here are a few ways we are celebrating...*

**"Fun Facts"** from our history will be featured in the Concordia Weekly and in pre-service slides to share pieces of our rich history throughout the year.

**Concordia in 150 seconds or less** videos from leaders, past staff members, and others will be shared.

**The history of Concordia** is being written by our very own Mark Zimmerman. This will be the first update to our written history in 30 years.

**Our Anniversary Celebration** will be a weekend of looking back and looking forward. We'll celebrate 150 years, dedicate our renewed facilities, and look ahead to God's future blessings. This celebration is tentatively scheduled for the weekend of October 5th and 6th, 2024.