



ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
2024 Annual Report
For the January 26, 2025, Meeting of the Congregation

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St. Mark's Lutheran Church Mission, Vision, and Core Values

God's Mission for St. Marks:

Celebrating God's love and forgiveness, we serve others.

We welcome everyone to St. Mark's Lutheran Church, where individuals and families can grow in their relationship with Jesus and one another through a variety of worship styles, ministries, and service.

God's Ideal Vision for St. Marks:

Following Jesus' example, we feed the hungry, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, nurse the sick, and visit the imprisoned as we see Jesus in the faces of those we serve.

Living Our Core Values:

We strive to model our Core Values in our day-to-day behavior, both within St. Marks and in our daily lives. When we fall short, we pray for God's divine intervention and support to help us remain true to our highest and best selves.

PRAYER

- We pray for guidance from God. Prayer brings us closer to God. God promises to answer.
- We pray for each other and for those in need within and outside the walls.
- We pray with thankfulness.
- We promise to listen – prayer is conversation.

ACCESSIBILITY

- We promise that all will have access to worship.
- We promise to remove barriers and project invitation and welcome.
- We promise to step out in faith with openness to what God wants us to be and acceptance of the diversity of cultures and people.

SERVICE

- We promise to develop and/or support Christian-based and other service/support organizations to achieve our vision.
- We promise to support the needs of one another just as we support those outside our walls.
- We promise to keep our doors open to all in need and share what we have.

COMMUNICATION

- We promise to listen to all with understanding, grace and patience.
- We promise to use all communication methods to share the gospel with others and all our members.
- We promise to use a variety of communication methods to connect with, inform, and educate our members, guests, and the larger community.

EDUCATION

- We share what we have learned about Christ and His redeeming love with others.
- We offer educational opportunities to teach and learn about Jesus through worship, music and teaching, Bible study, Sunday school, confirmation classes, youth programs and outreach activities.

WORSHIP

- We provide convenient, relevant, meaningful worship experiences that appeal to the broader community and to the diverse members of our congregation.
- Our worship engages the spirit, reveals the truth, celebrates through music and song, and prepares us to share God's message of love and forgiveness.
- We create worship opportunities that are inclusive, multi-generational and engaging for youth.

YOUTH

- We promise to intentionally provide a safe environment to learn about and seek God through relevant and age-appropriate opportunities to worship, serve and learn.

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

- Our words and actions build each other up, encourage and support each other.
- We practice empathy and forgiveness.
- We encourage openness, honesty, and transparency.

ST. MARK'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
Agenda for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation January 26, 2025

AGENDA

Call to Order: President Chris Lewis

Opening Devotion and Prayer: Pastor Karla

St. Mark's Mission

Agenda Review for the January 26, 2025, Annual Meeting

Check for Quorum of 35 members (in person and Live ZOOM participants)

Approve of Minutes of Congregational Meetings

- January 28, 2024, Annual Meeting
- October 6, 2024, Special Meeting of the Congregation
- November 24, 2024, Special Meeting of the Congregation

Approve 2025 Budgets: Congregation VOTE required

- 2025 Budget of the Congregation
- 2025 Memorial Endowment Budget

Reports:

- Pastor Karla Halvorson – Pastoral Report
- Pastor Alicia Saenz – Pastoral Report
- Campus Revitalization Task Group (CRTG), Security – Chris Lewis
- Chris Lewis – Church Council & Staff
 - Thank you to retiring Council Member: Melissa Hernandez
 - Thank you to our faithful and dedicated staff: Pastor Karla Halvorson, Pastor Alicia Saenz, Cindy Diaz, Maria Luisa Guzman, Jason Chase, Nathan Estrada, David Hernandez, Daniel Alinado, and Isaiah Aguirre

Directions for Voting

- Complete, or turn in paper ballot at the office by 4pm on Friday, January 24, or drop in the narthex on Sunday at 10am. During “in-person” Annual meeting in sanctuary (if attending).
- Complete online ballot (in advance) or during Live ZOOM meeting via link to ballot in the newsletter.
- All voting ends when the Annual Meeting is completed. Results will be announced immediately after counting and in the February 1 newsletter.

Closing Prayer – The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Minutes - January 28, 2024, Annual Meeting of the Congregation

Call to Order

Opening Devotion and Prayer: Pastor Karla

St. Mark's Mission

Agenda Review for the January 28, 2024, Annual Meeting

Check for Quorum of 35 members (in person and Live ZOOM participants) = 72 present

Approved of Minutes of Congregational Meetings: Unanimous

- January 29, 2023, Annual Meeting

Approved 2024 Budgets: Unanimous

- 2024 Budget
- 2024 Memorial Endowment Fund Budget

Elected Congregational Representatives: Approval ranged from 70 – 73 votes per candidate

- Candidates for 2024 Church Council
 - Chris Lewis Term 2, Year 1
 - Bruce Mansfield Term 1, Year 1
 - Luz Rivera Term 1, Year 1
 - Karl Larsen Term 1, Year 1
 - Patricia Villa Term 1, Year 1
- Candidates for the 2024 Legacy Committee: Unanimous
 - Doug Essex
- Candidates for 2024 Nominating Committee: Unanimous
 - Sheri Barker, Retiring Council
 - Erick Posada, Retiring Council
 - Robert Nava, Retiring Council
 - Consuelo (Chelo) Acosta
 - Linda Nerat
- Lay Representatives for the 2024 Pacifica Synod Conference: Unanimous
 - Sheri Barker
 - Patricia Hernandez
 - Erick Posada (alternate)

Approved New Bylaws: Unanimous

Reports:

- Pastor Karla Halvorson – Pastoral Report
- Pastor Alicia Saenz – Pastoral Report
- Property – Chris Lewis
- Chris Lewis – Church Council
 - Thank you to retiring Council Members: Sheri Barker, Skip Knudson, Erick Posada, and Robert Nava

Directions for Voting

- After “in-person” Annual meeting in sanctuary (if attending)
- After Live Facebook/ZOOM meeting via online link to ballot (see newsletter for link)

- Monday, January 29, 2023, 10:00 AM–12:00 PM, noon, paper ballot to Office

Closing Prayer – The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Respectfully submitted,
Sheri Barker, acting Secretary

Minutes - October 6, 2024, Special Meeting of the Congregation

A special meeting of the Congregation of St. Mark's Lutheran Church of Chula Vista, Inc. was convened at 10:26 AM on October 6, 2024. Christopher Lewis, President of the Congregation presided over the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting was to approve a loan from The Mission Investment Fund in the amount of \$700,000.00. The purpose of the loan was: "Complete the required renovations to house a critically needed, affordable community Childcare Center on our upper campus that will be run by our Tenant, Educational Enrichment Services (EES). EES has signed a 15 year /ease with St. Mark's". The required quorum of voting members was established.

Forty (40) members present and twenty (20) voting on line approved the loan. The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 AM.

Submitted:
Patricia Villa,
Secretary

Minutes – November 24, 2024, Special Meeting of the Congregation

A special meeting of the Congregation was called for the specific purpose of electing the officers and directors of the Congregation Council for the ensuing year, January 1, 2025-December 31, 2025.

A quorum was confirmed and the meeting called to order at 10:10 AM. Ballots were distributed to all members present. Members who were unable to attend were permitted to vote on line.

Balloting was closed at 10:20 AM with all ballots accounted for.

The ballot carried with unanimous approval. Meeting was adjourned at 10:25 AM.

The following officer nominees were elected:

Chris Lewis-President (Term 2, Year 2)
Karl Larsen-Vice President (Term 1, Year 2)
Sheri Barker-Secretary (Term 1, Year 1)
Margarita Alvarez-Treasurer (Term 2, Year 1)

The following director nominees were elected:

Maria Blanco (Term 1, Year 1)
Krystina Torres (Term 2, Year 1)
Dorothy Geier (Term 2, Year 1)
Gerd Pfeiffer (Term 2, Year 1)
Dennis Coughlin (Term 2, Year 1)
Bruce Mansfield (Term 1, Year 2)
Luz Rivera (Term 1, Year 2)
David Hernandez (Term 1, Year 2)
Patty Hernandez Villa Term 1, Year 2)

Presented:

Christopher H Lewis,
President

Pastor Karla Halvorson 2024 Annual Report

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my savior” Luke 1, Mary’s song of praise

What an incredible year it has been. My heart sings glory and praise to God! The emphasis of 2024 has been the 70th Anniversary, building fund and campus revitalization, but here’s what else took place...

Worship - Worship continues to be vibrant, varied, and inclusive with improved bi-lingual and trilingual services. As in previous years, we worship together (English/ Spanish) approximately once per month and have expanded to include Glory Lutheran (Mandarin) about 3 times per year. The level of involvement of our members is noteworthy. Volunteers help lead worship, prepare the altar, read and pray, usher and keep safe, assist with Sunday school and all our audio/visual needs. Thank you!

Our multilingual services include the annual meeting, Lenten worship, the Palm Sunday youth pageant (with Glory Lutheran), Pentecost, VBS Sunday, God’s Work Our Hands Sunday (with Glory Lutheran), Reformation Sunday (also Confirmation Sunday), and the youth Christmas pageant with Glory Lutheran.

We completed the school year with hand bells and began the school year with a vocal quartet which we hope will become a small choir. Our director of Music, Jason Chase, continues to impress us with his many talents and overarching abilities. Jason Chase and I have been working on a Service of Comfort and Hope, a YouTube service intended to comfort and assist those in the process of dying and their loved ones. We hope to complete this in the new year.

Special services this year included an Interfaith Thanksgiving service at St John’s Episcopal, Drive-thru Ash Wednesday service, Bi-lingual Prayer Around the Cross during Lent, and Dia de los Muertos.

Member Care has been a key focus of our ministry at St Mark's for 2024. Our Member Care group is guided by Dorothy Geier. Thanks to everyone, especially Mary Rankin, for superb leadership as we delivered plants, sweet bread and cards to our homebound in both August (God's Work Our Hands Sunday) and December 1. Sheri Barker graced us with a wonderful grief seminar which greatly helped our members. Member care will continue to be a priority for this congregation. **Please let me or Dorothy know if someone is ill, hospitalized, or you are simply noticing they haven't been in church!**

This year we also offered senior lunches during Lent with Bible study and conversation led by Caye Smith Bolin. We enjoyed wonderful lunches prepared by Chuyita Chavarin with enough food to feed everyone coming to the evening service as well. We continued this tradition with an Advent luncheon (light potluck) and Bible study.

Evangelism - With around 300 cars coming through our parking lot for the second Friday food distribution, members of St Mark's and I hand out information about upcoming events, invite people to church, and offer to pray with people. I have been blessed to be joined this year by Dora Tucker, Clelia Cabera, Chuyita Chavarin and Maria Blanco. Deb Lechner prepares the fliers, Cindy Diaz translates, and away we go! We are developing trusting relationships with those receiving food and now see them at our events. If you would like to volunteer, simply offer 1.5 hours of your time and you will also receive the food for the day.

With the help of Carol Whittier Ross and Margarita Alvarez, Chello Acosta, Patty Hernandez, and Luz Rivera, we've had 2 successful semesters of English as a Second Language classes through Southwestern Community College. We find the ESL department to be very kind and accommodating, however we must ensure at least 10 students per class, or we will lose this opportunity. We look forward to our third round of classes beginning Feb 4, 2025.

Under Pastor Alicia's guidance, our regular outreach is becoming more successful, well-planned and advertised. These include food distribution, the Drive through Ash Wednesday, Rummage sales, Dia de los Muertos, God's Work, Our Hands, and Posada. Each of these events allows us to meet and speak with our neighbors. Huge thanks to Sheri and Dave Barker for banners, flags and diligently changing the marquee sign, as well as Deb Lechner and members of our 11:15 service for advertising and spreading the word on Facebook, newspapers and in person.

Youth - We had another wonderfully successful Vacation Bible School with about 54 youth, including many junior leaders. We are very grateful for the added help of security this year. About 30 adults participated as well through planning, purchasing, cooking, and/or daily involvement. We followed this event with an evening of fun and games to keep the momentum going.

ELCA National Youth Gathering - 3 of our young people (David Hernandez, Daniel Aliando, Elsa Jerpseth) and Pastor Alicia and Melissa Hernandez attended the ELCA National Youth Gathering in New Orleans. This is the first involvement St Mark's has had with the Gathering in several decades.

Thanks to the endowment committee, rummage sales and pancake breakfast, as well as a generous grant from the Latino Ministry Endowment Fund.

One of the benefits of losing the ample space at St Mark's is the opportunity to consolidate.

Melissa Hernandez, Maria Blanco, Pastor Alicia and I began conversation with Bella Liu and Shu Hsiao from Glory Lutheran in order to combine our youth (and possibly Sunday school). Through prayer and

much conversation, we chose a curriculum and have 5 teachers on rotation with around 15 youth each Sunday for Bible study.

The combined youth of St Mark's and Glory participated in three joint worship services this year - the Easter pageant, God's Work Our Hands, and the Christmas pageant/Posada. These events have been some of the most joyful worship experiences of my life.

We have had several all-family events this year, including Sea World, pool parties, movie nights, park and beach picnics and Bible study. Melissa and Pastor Alicia hosted several Friday night youth events.

Three of our young people were confirmed on Reformation Sunday - Xoel and Xavier Marquez and Joshua Flint. We began this rite of passage with a meal and a blessing of the young people. They made a public profession of their faith the next day and boldly challenged us to keep following God in faith.

Melissa leads the Children's message and Sunday school each Sunday with up to 4 youth during the 9 am service and 14 youth during the 11:15 am service.

For the safety of everyone, St Mark's, Glory and Areumdaun have all undergone the mandatory Prevention of Sexual Abuse of Minors training and Live scan fingerprinting. Glory and Areumdaun will also implement campus safety protocols in the new year.

Moving - I want to thank everyone for your positive attitude and assistance as we moved everyone to the lower level. With the grace of God, we all fit! Everyone gave up something. What I notice is your sacrifice has made us more of a community.

Bible Study - We began in-person (hybrid) Bible study in January on the Book of John (January – April). We decided to delay resuming Bible study until after the 70th anniversary. In December we resumed a Bible study for Advent, which has been delightful. Bible study is also offered on Sunday mornings by Pastor Alicia and James Jerpseth. We are currently planning a Lenten lunch and Bible study (Wednesday noon) similar to what took place in Advent.

Staff - We are extremely grateful to Cindy Diaz, our office manager. She warmly greets everyone, directs people where they need to go, translates all outgoing media and weekly bulletins, and serves as a wonderful partner in ministry. I appreciate her time management and gentle, calm demeanor.

Maria Luisa Guzman, our custodian, continues to be a gift from God. Her work is more than work—it's ministry. She was hired by LSS Project Hand and now splits her time between these two jobs. She is greatly respected by all who work with her and a natural leader.

Melissa Hernandez enthusiastically leads our youth and children's ministries. Her job description continues to change and grow, now including leading youth planning meetings, youth Bible studies, coordinating with other congregations, as well as Sunday school and Children's message. We meet weekly to plan children and youth Christian education and family outings. She was able to attend the ELCA Youth Leader Extravaganza in 2024 (and planned for 2025) which is helping her grow and expand this ministry.

Audio/ Visual: Nathan Estrada, Sheri Barker, David Hernandez and Daniel Alinado and Isaiah Aguirre, Jason Chase and Deb Lechner continue to improve and evaluate our sound, video and on-line presence. Andrew Vargas needed to move on—we miss him and wish him well.

Pastor Alicia and I continue our teamwork. We meet weekly, usually by phone, and communicate constantly. I am grateful for my colleague.

Cindy, Maria Luisa, Jason, Pastor Alicia, and I meet monthly to schedule and coordinate events. We share devotions, pray and support one another.

Mutual Ministry - We continue quarterly mutual ministry meetings to give and receive feedback about the direction St Mark's is going and support one another. We welcome Doug Nerat as the new chair of this committee and thank Sheri Barker for all her diligent work.

Pacifica Synod Council and synod wide involvement - I completed my term on the synod council in May 2024 and decided not seek re-election. My focus now is Pacifica Synod AMMPARO. We meet monthly to assist Lutheran congregations and organizations that work with asylum seekers and immigrants. In 2024, we made many trips to the border, helped organize PB&J lunches for those in transition, supported Survivors of Torture, Friends of Friendship Park and several shelters in Tijuana and Tecate. We celebrated the Posada at the border on Dec 15 with 11 other congregations (8 members from St Mark's) and a tour of Chicano Park. We will continue to do what we can to assist those seeking refuge. To find out more, speak to me or visit <https://www.elca.org/ammparo>

Grants - This past year we received, among other grants, the Latino Ministry Grant (\$9,000) for the National Youth Gathering, the Matthew 25 grant for meeting needs within our own community, the Warner Trust grant (\$1500) for VBS, the GEM grant for cross cultural work, the Cathryn Wright grant for Melissa Hernandez' continuing education. We have also asked you to apply for Thrivent Action Team Grants, and with these \$250 grants, have accomplished many projects worth about \$4,000.

Lutheran Social Services Updates - Our work with Lutheran Social Services continues to flourish. We love working with Gabby Bernal, Danney Alkana and Mari Lizagarra with Upward Bound and Talent Search. Our ties with LSS Project Hand and Johnny Violora and now Maria Luisa Guzman have grown and our participation in the huge food distribution has increased. We participated and helped to coordinate two volunteer parties for the food distribution volunteers, one at Christmas and one in June.

Ecumenical Work and Community Outreach - The Chula Vista clergy network has grown and now includes the Chula Vista Unitarian Universalist church, Chula Vista Methodist, First Presbyterian of Chula Vista, Community Congregational Church, St John's Episcopal, Frederika Manor, and Temple Beth Shalom. We meet about every other month and enjoyed the Thanksgiving Eve service at St John's.

We continue to support our Chula Vista Police Department with our well-used Police Break Room, (now on the lower level) coloring books and toys for police to distribute to kids in need, and our weekly prayers.

Our God's Work Our Hands Sunday was focused on our own congregation and those in need. This time we invited Glory Lutheran to join us and the joy increased! We made cards for our homebound and planted succulents, went out into the neighborhood and made many Blessing Bags to give to anyone in need. We enjoyed a carne asada meal following our morning of outreach.

Congregational Statistics:

Baptisms

Sky Rose Randall
Logan Fountain
Lacey Fountain
Rocco Emiliano Rivera

Confirmations

Xoel Marquez
Xavier Marquez
Joshua Flint

First Communions

Keane Coughlin
Kaila Coughlin

New members

Maria Blanco
Silvia Eagle
Al Hunt
Tommy Burke
Jazmin Vallejo
Madeline Ida Vasquez
Sky Rose Randall
James Fountain,
Carmen Fountain

Logan Fountain
Lacey Fountain
Rocco Emiliano Rivera

Deaths

Ruby Hultenius
Joyce Knudsen
Kris Raynes
Mary Jean Valeu
Dave Wilson
(Lottie Chellius- regular visitor)

What’s next?

As we go through this time of transition, I thank God for all of you. Your gracious accommodation of other groups, cultures, and languages and your desire to say “yes” fills me with gratitude. You’ve got to agree, it’s tiring but it’s FUN!

After EES settles in, we will find ourselves in a very different environment with new opportunities and challenges. God has helped us meet each challenge thus far and God will not let us down.

I believe it is very important that we prepare ourselves spiritually for the next chapter. Therefore, I am very happy to welcome back Centering Prayer, the ancient and simple practice of silent prayer, to St Mark’s. The Introductory Workshop (offered bilingually) is Saturday, January 18, 9-1 pm. You may remember that St Mark’s hosted a Centering Prayer group under Pastor Jan. I hope you will join us and find out how deeply satisfying and grounding this practice can be.

We will continue outreach with Pastor Alicia, member care, worship opportunities, concerts, youth programs AND...

The ELCA has taken notice of our multicultural work! I was contacted in mid-2024 and asked if St Mark’s would participate in a study of how some congregations successfully practice multi-cultural ministry (GOOD JOB, ST MARKS!)

St Mark’s council has agreed to start a conversation with the ELCA Ministries of Diverse Cultures and Communities, which may lead us into a 2-year study of what works, what doesn’t work, how we can support each other and what assistance we need to be successful in this type of vital ministry. More to come! The ELCA has already produced a statistical analysis of 13 ELCA congregations across the US like us, using interviews, ELCA congregational reports, local demographics and our websites. If you would like to receive a copy of the study, please contact me.

Pastor Alicia Saenz 2024 Annual Report

God is good; indeed, God is good and has made it possible for us to be able to celebrate the 70th anniversary of our church. In reality when we celebrate a church, we celebrate its people because the people are the church, the body of Christ, and the people of St. Mark's have endured for the glory of God. I am blessed to be part of such a wonderful hard-working group of people, along with Pastor Karla, and we know God is with us and will continue to help and guide us as we continue the work in the ministry we were called to do in the world and in our community. We continue thriving as one congregation in two languages with many cultures sharing the same building.

Some of my main responsibilities at St. Marks are: Spanish Worship, Outreach, Adult Education for the whole congregation on Sundays, First Communion Classes, coordinate bilingual worship services, followed by a lunch for the whole congregation, and helping make real that we are one congregation in two languages. As St. Mark's part-time Associate Pastor, I also share all other responsibilities of our congregation along with Pastor Karla, our Senior Pastor.

Worship in Spanish

We continue to offer both in-person and on-line options for Spanish Worship.

Music. We offer uplifting and inspiring music. Thanks to our choir at the 11:15 service; they are great and work really hard to deliver music that is sincerely appreciated by the people who attend the service. Big thanks to Manuel, Laura, Gloria, Gabriel and Jason.

Altar. Thanks to our Altar Ministry for preparing the communion, the bread and wine for the 11:15 Worship Service every Sunday. The altar Ministry serves both the 9 and the 11:15 service; they are amazing.

Outreach

Distributed multiple paper and verbal invitations to our church, this work is done by all the people in the 11:15 service going door to door, also inviting friends and family and people in different shopping centers and grocery stores. The food distribution is also a major area where Spanish speakers from our congregation, along with Pastor Karla let people know that everyone is welcomed at our church. I also had the opportunity to participate in this last Friday. Margarita Alvarez is the council outreach representative; we meet and discuss and plan the events and contemplate new possibilities.

- **Ash Wednesday drive-thru** Attendance was about 200 people who received a welcome, a plan for the 40 days of Lent, an explanation of the celebration and a special prayer per their request or a Lenten prayer.
- **Dia de los Muertos** Attendance was about 60 people, even though rain was in the forecast and it did rain. Despite that, it was a joyful celebration and honoring of the lives of the ones that had gone with God before us. Thanks to all that came and thanks to all the volunteers.
- **La Posada for the community**, about 140 people attended, thanks to one of our members who donated his Thrivent cards for the food and to the Legacy Committee for the Legacy fund donation. We enjoyed the most beautiful music with our Spanish Choir and Jason who sang Spanish Christmas Carols. Thanks Manuel, Jason, Gloria and Laura. We also served delicious carne asada and pollo asado tacos. Thanks to all who worked in the kitchen under the direction of Luz Rivera--you all did a wonderful job.

Each one of these events brings new people to our church who might stay; we reach the community, get to know the community, and let the community know that we welcome them in our church. Thanks to Karl Larsen who has been the security person for all outreach community events since 2011, and thanks to Chris Lewis for helping with security for the 2024 posada. Thanks to all other volunteers, especially Dennis and Walter who always help me move all heavy stuff in preparation for events and after events to put the stuff back.

Adult Education: Thanks be to God for James; he is always willing to help and come up with new ideas for Sunday bible studies between services. I lost count of the many different themes talked about in our Bible studies this year, but they all were fun, enlightening, and interesting. More is coming, if you have any idea of a specific topic, please let me or James know.

First Communion Classes A first communion class was held for about six weeks on Thursday nights at 7 PM; this is the only time when I was able to get the kids and parents at the church for the class since kids have so many extra-curricular activities. Six kids were instructed in the basics of the significance of communion, confession, prayer, the ten commandments, the creed and the Lord's prayer. Two of the kids will take a few more classes and then do their first communion. We also got the little bells out and learned a song that was played in both 9 and 11:15 services and in the Posada.

Bilingual Services followed by lunch for the whole congregation. This takes a lot of coordination between Pastor Karla, Cindy and me for the worship part; for the food part, thanks be to God for Luz Rivera who coordinates with me and Pastor Karla, but takes responsibility for the shopping, preparing and serving the food. Luz is able to do this because she is a great leader and we have many wonderful volunteers who help with all the work and cleaning. I am afraid I will forget some people if I mention names, but mainly, Chelo Acosta, Paty Hernandez, Margarita Alvarez, Yolanda Ceja, Pina, Clelia, Pedro Hernandez and Julio, along with many more volunteers.

70th Church Anniversary Reception. In coordination with Sheri, Pastor Karla and thanks to the whole crew mentioned above, plus Jean Lewis who coordinated appetizers, the reception was said to be elegant and the food delicious. Thanks to all the volunteers who took part.

ELCA National Youth Gathering in New Orleans. Attended with Melissa Hernandez and 3 of our young people (David Hernandez, Daniel Aliando, Elsa Jerpseth) This was a great experience for the youth, Melissa and I. We thank the St Mark's congregation, the Latino Ministry Endowment Fund for a generous grant, along with thanks to the Legacy committee for the grants that also helped financing the trip, and thanks to the youth for their work in raising funds for events.

Covering for Pastor Karla. Thank you all for your support and patience when I cover for Pastor Karla, thanks to the ushers, AV, helpers and worshippers.

11:15 Service Ministry. I attend to the needs of the Spanish speaking part of the congregation, as well as the needs of their family and friends that might request a Pastor visit, a call, a funeral (two during 2024), Bible studies and prayers.

Staff- Thanks to Cindy Diaz, Maria Luisa Guzman, Jason Chase, David Hernandez, Daniel Alinado and Isaiah Aguirre.

Thanks to the whole congregation for a great and productive year, I can say that everyone in their ministry did the best job ever!

2024 was the year when we finally were able to experience the connection with leaders of the 9 and 11:15 services and work together in different ministries and projects for our church and our congregation, thus thriving as one congregation in two languages for the glory of our God. Many new opportunities await us and we faithfully and happily open our arms to the new year with all the surprises and challenges it might bring, because we know that God always has good plans for us.

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11.

With much love., Pastor Alicia Sáenz.

St. Mark’s Church Council President's Annual Report

Dear St. Mark’s Family:

Once again, I am truly grateful for the opportunity to have served our Congregation as its president in 2024. As I reflect on the last few years, I am struck by the extraordinary dedication, grit, and faith this congregation has exhibited in meeting and overcoming numerous challenges in all areas including ministry, financial, material, personnel, and leadership. Through your faith, determination, courage and love, we are, once again, gaining traction in all areas and I want to thank each of you for your continued support.

The year 2024 was a year that we were able to effectively build upon the experiences of the previous years and begin to develop a predictable momentum that will strengthen and support the mission to which we are called.

This past year we were blessed to be able to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of God’s ministry on the corner of Hilltop and I Streets. It was a spectacular event and one that brought our members, present and past, together once again in harmonious fellowship.

The total support of our congregation has enabled us, after several years of planning, to commence the revitalization or reimagining of our campus to allow for the placement of a childcare facility on our campus, thus fulfilling one of the goals this congregation defined in our Ministry Site Profile created over 4 years ago. While well underway, we still have much to do to complete all the work necessary to accommodate our childcare tenant, along with the work we must complete to facilitate accessibility for our congregation and others to co-occupy the entire campus.

I am pleased to report that our Congregation Council is a full team of strong and energetic leaders, and I look forward to serving with them to complete the work we have started and maintain a strong, steady stride throughout 2025.

This Annual Report contains the reports of all members of your Congregation Council, and I strongly encourage you to read their reports as they have given an immense amount of volunteer time in service of our congregation and richly deserve your acknowledgement.

Lastly, I encourage all of us to take a deep breath as we roll into 2025 and allow the ministries, processes and programs to develop and proceed without creating additional demands on our members and budget.

Once we find our stride, we can then resume a robust building process, mainly in the areas of ministry and community service.

Blessings, Chris Lewis, President

Attendance 2024

date	time	eyeballs (live)	Facebook views* (week)	YouTube* (week)	in person	newsletter* *	Notes
Jan-7	9:00	7	64	10	62	67/1 (100/9)	
Jan-7	11:15	0	36	23	44		
Jan-14	9:00	8	74	13	65	76/9	
Jan-14	11:15	0	53	43	39		
Jan -21	9:00	4	64	13	65	(102/23)	
Jan -21	10:00	NA	NA	2			budget meeting
Jan -21	11:15	1	37	32	35		
Jan-28	10:00	2	41	9	83	93/24 (93/24)	
Jan-28	11:15	1	49	6			annual meeting
Feb-4	9:00	7	49	4	66	79/5 (97/8)	
Feb-4	11:15	3	44	37	37		
Feb 11	9:00	7	57	9	57	74/9 (92/11)	
Feb 11	11:15	2	31	21	31		
Feb 14	noon	1	16	NA	30	95/1 (101/1)	Ash Wednesday
Feb 18	9:00	8	45	20	61	77/8	
Feb 18	11:15	1	30	32	42		
Feb 21	6:30	4	45	39		112/0 (115)	Lenten Prayer Service
Feb 25	9:00	4	71	12	72	76/7 (99/11)	
Feb 25	11:15	NA	NA	NA	40		
Mar 3	9:00	5	41	23	68	70/5 (98/16)	
Mar 3	11:15	2	56	40	38		
Mar 10	9:00	8	52	21	64	74/6 (94/11)	
Mar 10	11:15	2	37	21	29		
Mar 15	10	NA	NA	NA			Kris Raynes funeral
Mar 17	9:00	5	46	23	65	82/6 (94/10)	
Mar 17	10	5	60	30			Stories of our lives - Carol Waibel
Mar 17	11:15	1	64	NA	37		
Mar 24	10	7	82	31	99	77/6 (95/9)	Palm Sunday
Mar 29	12	3	54	12	30	119/9 (121/9)	Good Friday
Mar 29	7	2	46	8	30		Good Friday
Mar 31	9:00	8	28	85	115	68/5 (80/5)	Easter
Mar 31	11:15	7	29	32	58		
April 7	9:00	5	54	23	58	64/6 (82/11)	
April 7	11:15	3	49	82	34		
April 14	9:00	6	61	13	62	70/5 (93/8)	
April 14	11:15	2	38	25	33		

April 21	9:00	7	59	16	57	73/5 (89/12)	
April 21	11:15	2	45	46	39		
April 28	9:00	10	65	33	73	72/9 (89/12)	have to zoom to YouTube now, instead of Facebook
April 28	11:15	2	56	36	32		
May 5	9:00	7	86	41	56	74/6 (90/10)	
May 5	11:15	3	36	21	22		
May 12	9:00	7	67	48	63	62/14	Bishop Dave Nagler preaching at 9am
May 12	11:15	4	54	21	53		
May 19	10:00	NA	NA	22	88	94/5	
May 26	9:00	NA	NA	25	53	88/22	
May 26	11:15	NA	NA	25	25		
June 2	9:00	NA	NA	27	56	89/23	
June 2	11:15	NA	NA	16	29		
June 9	9:00	NA	NA	35	71	98/19	
June 9	11:15	NA	NA	26	29		
June 16	9:00	NA	NA	33	61	87/18	
June 16	11:15	NA	NA	7	26		
June 23	10:00	7	NA	25	101	80/5 (93/9)	
June 30	9:00	6	NA	13	52	68/7 (87/11)	
June 30	11:15	3	NA	7	49		
July 7	9:00	7	NA	36	63	100/8	
July 7	11:15	NA	NA	18	29		
July 14	9:00	NA	NA	24	54	98/11	
July 14	11:15	NA	NA	7	15		
July 21	9:00	NA	NA	28	60	128/17	
July 21	11:15	NA	NA	19			
July 28	9:00	8	NA	22	69	63/7	
July 28	11:15	4	NA	13	31		
Aug 4	9:00	7	NA	31	61	87/10	
Aug 4	11:15	NA	NA	14	31		
Aug 11	9:00	NA	NA	28	53	91/15	
Aug 11	11:15	NA	NA	26	32		
Aug 18	9:00	NA	NA	43	128	107/21	

Aug 25	9:00	NA	NA	22	70	94/13	
Aug 25	11:15	NA	NA	7	48		
Sept 1	9:00	NA	NA	23	62	57/8	
Sept 1	11:15	NA	NA	27	17		
Sept 8	9:00	NA	NA	39	59	107/19	
Sept 8	11:15	NA	NA	9	40		
Sept 15	9:00	NA	NA	24	60	108/22	
Sept 15	10						Architect Program
Sept 15	11:15	NA	NA	23	41		
Sept 22	9:00	6	NA	27	64	79/10	
Sept 22	11:15	NA	NA	13	43		
Sept 29	9:00	NA	NA	45	77	118/15	70th Anniversary Celebration
Sept 29	11:15	NA	NA	36	39		
Oct 6	9:00	3	NA	23	61	104/21	
Oct 6	11:15	2	NA	17	36		
Oct 13	9:00	3	NA	37	55	102/15	
Oct 13	11:15	2	NA	17	47		
Oct 20	9:00	2	NA	24	56	70/6	
Oct 20	11:15	1	NA	15	36		
Oct 27	10:00	1	NA	28	102	81/8	
Nov 3	9:00			32	57		
Nov 3	11:15			10	53		
Nov 10	9:00			17	63		
Nov 10	11:15			15	42		
Nov 17	9:00			20	60		
Nov 17	11:15			8	43		
Nov 24	9:00			27	61		
Nov 24	11:15			13	48		
Dec 1	9:00			24	73		
Dec 1	11:15			13	42		
Dec 8	10:00			87	142		Children's Play/bilingual
Dec 15	9:00			43	82		
Dec 15	11:15			13	46		
Dec 22	9:00			41	41		
Dec 22	11:15			17	74		
Dec 24	5:00			27	141		Candlelight service
Dec 29	9:00			32	36		
Dec 29	11:15			13	56		

Church Property Maintenance Report 2024

January – Blink cameras installed. Begin flood repair in restrooms and lower closet.

February -Repair flood damage – drywall paint – closet light – vinyl floor trim- etc.

March – Cintas fire inspection – exit lights – alarm pulls, 0 battery replacement – panic bars – pergola painted.

April – Precision Electric lights and ballast in sanctuary. Installed Conex (Cargo Container) box April 25th from Coronado Storage.

May – Skyjack rental GB Equipment 1 day rental to repair sanctuary lighting. Office window was broken and repaired.

June – Begin closet and classroom cleanup – Ongoing for months. Paint 3 classrooms in the lower level.

July – Build shelves in Conex box. Youth room cleaned out. Installed security signs around the property.

August – N/A

September – Installed banners for 70th anniversary

October – Prepare for construction, remove excess property, begin fencing.

November – Start demo. Purchased conduit for camera run.

December – Asbestos removal begins and finished around 12/15/24

This contains some if not all the major and minor work done by Walt and me.

Blessings,
Denny Coughlin.

70th Anniversary Report

March 7, 1954, marked the first church service held for the newly formed St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Chula Vista. The service included 168 worshipers representing 64 families. March 7, 2024, marked the 70th anniversary of that service and planning began for a huge 70th Anniversary celebration on September 28 & 29.

Purpose of the 70th Anniversary celebration: Express gratitude for God's faithfulness over the last 70 years, reflect on the history and impact of St. Mark's, cast a vision and inspire the congregation to find new ways to fulfill God's mission for St. Mark's.

The Anniversary Planning Team was convened on June 26 to begin the week-to-week work of preparation for this landmark event. The amazing, multi-talented planning team included Phyllis Stallard, Herb & Dorothy Geier, Bob and Debbie Lechner, Chris and Jean Lewis, Margarita Alvarez, Dick Bolin, Pastor Karla, Pastor Alicia, Paty Hernandez Villa, Chelo Acosta, Luz Rivera, Linda Nerat, Jason Chase, and Dave and Sheri Barker.

The team narrowed a list of 15 potential anniversary themes to 3 and then the congregation selected: *A Future Filled with Promise*. This theme references Jeremiah 29:11 *For I know the plans I have for you declares the Lord, plans to prosper and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.*

The team then ordered a new 70th Anniversary logo, theme banners for the sanctuary and Jacobson Hall, a special celebration brick to assist with fundraising, as well as souvenir coffee mugs for the formal celebration banquet on September 28.

The Anniversary Planning Team defined the congregation of St. Mark's as "more than a building; it is a living, thriving body of believers who have been united by their shared faith and a commitment to God." As a result, the team researched all active giving members over the last 10 years and sent each an invitation to participate in the weekend of 70th Anniversary events and fundraising for the Campus Revitalization Project which was focused primarily on building a new childcare center.

A detailed 70th Anniversary Activity Calendar was created and guided the team's actions for the next 13 weeks. This calendar included weekly activities related to Temple Talks, Christian Education hour activities, Newsletter articles, Tasks to be completed each week, and Focused church-wide activities. Each action was leveraged to build energy and excitement about the 70th Anniversary celebration and the fundraising required to begin the extensive remodel of the upper campus to accommodate a critically needed, affordable community childcare center in partnership with our new tenant, Education Enrichment Service (EES), the largest childcare provider in San Diego County.

At the same time, we hired a professional grant writer to help us locate and apply for grants to help fund the \$700,000 childcare remodel, and we implemented a local fundraising program to raise the additional \$300,000 required to complete auxiliary remodeling of the restrooms in the narthex, installation of our memorial brick patio, and the addition of solar panels to offset the current \$1,000+ per month in electricity bills.

The bulk of the 70th Anniversary celebration occurred on September 28-29. In preparation for this special event, Music Director Jason Chase, wrote special verses for two hymns which were sung several times during the weekend: *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* and *Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee*. The Anniversary weekend agenda included:

Saturday, September 28:

- An Old-Fashioned Hymn Sing including our 11:15 musicians, with Margaret Galliard on organ and Jason on piano. 110 people enjoyed the concert.
- A patio reception for guests and visitors, with St. Mark's memorabilia displays
- A formal 70th Anniversary dinner in Jacobson Hall for 150 people, skillfully prepared by our 11:15 team. We hired servers so all members could enjoy the dinner and program. The highlight was Bob Lechner's MC work and his narrated history of St. Mark's with slides.

Sunday, September 29:

- Two worship services of celebration, again with piano and organ. 130 people attended the two services. The 11:15 service celebrated 13 years of Spanish-language ministry at St. Mark's as well as our collective 70th Anniversary.

Generous members and friends donated a total of \$15,315 in donations over the weekend, marking a new total of \$171,315 in cash and pledges toward the Campus Revitalization Project and the childcare center

project. At that point, the grant writing team had over \$400,000 in grant applications pending with fervent prayers for additional funding.

By December 15, members and friends raised a total of \$207,000 or 69% of our local fundraising goal in support of the Campus Revitalization and community childcare center. We praise God for our generous donors--people of faith who continue to value and support our mission: Celebrating God's Love and Forgiveness, We Serve Others.

Nominating Committee 2025

Note: A Council Term = 2 years. A member is restricted to serving 2 terms in a row.

2024 Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is elected by the Congregation at the Annual Meeting and is defined in our constitution as one of the Congregation Committees. This year's team was tasked with identifying a) two new candidates for Church Council (2-year term that can be extended to two year terms), four candidates for the 2025 Nominating Committee (1-year term), since Melissa Hernandez (retiring Council member) is an automatic member of the 5-person team, and c) two lay representatives (1-year term) to the Pacifica Synod Conference on May 16-17, 2025 in Dana Point.

The list of 2025 Church Council Members (elected November 24, 2024):

Maria Blanco, Term 1, Year 1
Sheri Barker, Secretary, Term 1, Year 1
Krystina Torres, Term 2, Year 1
Dorothy Geier, Term 2, Year 1
Gerd Pfeiffer, Term 2, Year 1
Margarita Alvarez, Treasurer, Term 2, Year 1
Dennis Coughlin, Term 2, Year 1
Patricia Hernandez Villa, Term 1, Year 2

*** Continuing Council Members, 2025:**

Chris Lewis, President, Term 2, year 2
Bruce Mansfield, Term 1, year 2
Karl Larsen, Vice President, Term 1, year 2
Luz Rivera, Term 1, year 2
David Hernandez, Term 1, year 2 (youth representative)

2025 Nominating Committee (elected November 24, 2024):

Melissa Hernandez, Retiring Council, automatic
Jane Gerber
Yolanda Ceja
Marcia Salvestrini
Sherri Coughlin

2025 Pacifica Synod Conference Lay Representatives (elected November 24, 2024):

Melissa Hernandez (under 30 representative)
Gerd & Ofelia Pfeiffer
Dick Bolin (alternate)

* **Legacy Committee, 2025:** No changes in membership (see Legacy report)

Yours in Christ, the 2024 Nominating Committee,
Sheri Barker, chair; Erick Posada, Roberto Nava, Chelo Acosta, Linda Nerat
included Sheri Barker, Herb Geier, Patricia Hernandez, Ben Valeu and Sherri Coughlin.

Campus Revitalization Task Group (CRTG)

Following the end of 2023, after much preparation, the CRTG met in early March, and has continued to meet approximately twice monthly throughout the year. The multi-talented team includes Chris Lewis (Chair), Gerd Pfeiffer (Co-Chair), Kent Costen (architect & construction manager), Diane Wages (finance), Dennis Coughlin & Walt Bergener (remodel preparation & construction supervision), Karl Larsen (all around support), Dick Bolin (legal), Sheri Barker (fundraising), James Jerpseth (prior church-childcare center experience) and Celine Krimston, CEO or alternate representative for Education Enrichment Services (EES). Pastor Karla and Pastor Alicia have participated as available and were kept informed at each step of the process. Each person on the team was selected for a specific expertise and has served faithfully and enthusiastically throughout the year.

Tasks Accomplished:

- 15-year lease signed with EES for childcare facility with deposit.
- \$700,000 Mission Investment Fund loan obtained to remodel for childcare center, with October 6 Congregation approval.
- \$207,000 raised in family & friend donations and pledges toward St. Mark's related remodel.
- Submitted 14 grants requesting \$515,000; all grants to date denied. Beginning resubmission process for 2025 with reworked grant application design.
- Obtained 5 strong letters of support for funding from major Chula Vista leadership.
- City of Chula Vista expedited plan approval and permits to advance the remodel.
- Presentations to the congregation regarding the project by Kent Costen Architects & Celine Krimston (EES) and her team.
- Relocated all activities previously located in upper-level classrooms.
- A Gantt Chart of construction schedule was created and monitored at each meeting.
- Seventy-two (72) St. Mark's Celebration bricks will be incorporated near the new walkway to Jacobson Hall, along with a possible water feature and appropriate landscaping.
- Construction plans are flexible and allow for changes in schedules, contractor selection and financing.
- Diane Flint Wages & Krystina Torres oversee the invoicing and payment processing while maintaining financial analysis oversight.
- Additional requirements for the joint use of the kitchen by EES and others are being negotiated, and more official information will be forthcoming as soon as a mutual agreement is obtained.
- Sheri Barker has worked diligently to acquire outside funding and, in addition to government entities, is in continuing discussions with other philanthropic and private organizations.

The CRTG has and will continue to work diligently to complete this wonderful project to provide a viable venue for childcare so desperately needed in our community. Thank you for your continued prayerful support.

Submitted: Chris Lewis, Chairman

2024 Financial Statements
Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2024

	Dec 31, 24
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
10000 • CURRENT ASSETS	
10100 • Petty Cash-Office	100.00
10200 • US Bank-Checking	273,568.29
10300 • Mission Investment Fund	5,106.40
10500 • Mission Investment Fund CD	51,208.00
	329,982.69
Total 10000 • CURRENT ASSETS	
10201 • US Bank Money Market	
10201.1 • Reserve Facilities	20,936.52
10201.4 • Money Market Main	5,767.22
	26,703.74
Total 10201 • US Bank Money Market	
13000 • EES Loan	
10400 • Restricted Accounts	505,781.73
10401 • Banner Bank - Endowment	3,937.00
10402 • Investment	
10403 • Thrivent Investment	151,466.61
10404 • Unrealized Gain or Loss	46,252.26
	197,718.87
Total 10402 • Investment	
Total 10400 • Restricted Accounts	
	201,655.87
Total Checking/Savings	
	1,084,124.03
Total Current Assets	
	1,084,124.03
Fixed Assets	
FIXED ASSETS	
12100 • Land and Building	5,495,000.00
12300 • Furniture, Fixtures & Equip	826,640.37
	6,321,640.37
Total FIXED ASSETS	
	6,321,640.37
Total Fixed Assets	
	6,321,640.37
Other Assets	
OTHER ASSETS	
14200 • Deposits & Prepaid Expenses	
14205 • Prepaid Insurance	4,053.75
	4,053.75
Total 14200 • Deposits & Prepaid Expenses	
	4,053.75
Total OTHER ASSETS	
	4,053.75
Total Other Assets	
	4,053.75
TOTAL ASSETS	
	7,389,818.15
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
20000 • Accounts Payable	3,315.76
	3,315.76
Total Accounts Payable	
	3,315.76
Credit Cards	
20600 • Union Bank CC	3,324.30
	3,324.30
Total Credit Cards	
	3,324.30
Other Current Liabilities	
CURRENT LIABILITIES	
OTHER CURRENT LIABILITIES	
20650 • Church Revitalization	700,000.00
20700 • Security Deposit	400.00
	700,400.00
Total OTHER CURRENT LIABILITIES	
	700,400.00

ST.MARK'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Balance Sheet
 As of December 31, 2024

	<u>Dec 31, 24</u>
PAYROLL LIABILITIES	
21003 - Retirement Liability	440.97
Total PAYROLL LIABILITIES	<u>440.97</u>
Total CURRENT LIABILITIES	700,840.97
DESIGNATED FUNDS	
33100 - EES and Church Revitalization	
33125 - EES Deposit - Church Donations	184,573.82
33150 - EES Remodel Expenses	(200,256.07)
33175 - Church Revitalization Expenses	(15,628.56)
Total 33100 - EES and Church Revitalization	<u>(31,310.81)</u>
30400 - Pastor's Discretionary Fund	(331.65)
34215 - Concert Series	
34216 - Concert Series Income	28,943.00
34217 - Concert Series Expenses	(18,340.95)
Total 34215 - Concert Series	<u>10,572.05</u>
Total DESIGNATED FUNDS	<u>(21,070.41)</u>
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED FUNDS	
30215 - Buildings and Grounds	145.00
30255 - Hearing Aid Fund	175.00
30330 - Project Hand	4,426.15
30340 - Designated Hispanic Ministry	13,944.58
30440 - YBS-Vacation Bible School	1,376.26
31180 - Memorial Garden Project	3,227.00
32000 - Worship	
32010 - Worship/Altar	257.48
32030 - Worship/Flowers	229.85
32050 - Worship/Organ	15,771.00
Total 32000 - Worship	<u>16,258.33</u>
32080 - Angel Tree	63.24
33070 - Youth	728.70
33071 - Prayer Quilt Ministry	1,216.67
33073 - Christmas in October	599.00
34300 - Evangelism/Fellowship	4,754.78
34500 - Thursday Quilters	3,943.15
34700 - WELCA	1,012.28
35000 - Music	1,196.44
Total TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED FUNDS	<u>53,066.68</u>
PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED FUNDS	
37000 - Endowment Fund	201,655.87
Total PERMANENTLY RESTRICTED FUNDS	<u>201,655.87</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>934,493.11</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>941,133.17</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>941,133.17</u>
Equity	
EQUITY	
38000 - Church Equity	5,848,330.75
Total EQUITY	<u>5,848,330.75</u>
39000 - Retained Earnings	611,649.86
Net Income	(11,195.63)
Total Equity	<u>6,448,684.98</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>7,389,818.15</u></u>

**YTD and Previous Year Comparison
Actual vs Annual Budget**

St. Mark's Lutheran Church Summary Budget Proposal

St. Mark's Lutheran Church Summary Financial Report December 2024 Year to Date

	Current Month Actual	Year to Date	Prev Year Comp	2024 Budget	% of Budget
INCOME					
Giving Income	39,595	317,316	312,564	318,500	100%
Other Income	2,122	24,262	159	23,037	105%
Thrivent Choice Income	-	1,856	2,579	3,500	53%
Facility Use Income	4,670	56,413	47,756	59,698	94%
TOTAL INCOME	46,387	399,847	363,058	404,735	99%
EXPENSE					
Administration	2,053	30,305	25,830	23,900	127%
Buildings & Grounds	2,548	55,757	47,833	50,066	111%
Christian Education	-	-	-	500	0%
Council & Conventions	-	750	1,431	900	83%
Evangelism & Fellowship	-	261	2,352	2,500	10%
Salaries & Benefits	23,621	278,685	245,660	286,819	97%
Youth	-	1,771	1,840	2,000	89%
Worship	184	3,663	5,109	4,200	87%
Community Outreach	-	602	-	2,000	30%
Mission	-	-	-	-	0%
Benevolence	7,963	31,850	32,100	31,850	100%
TOTAL EXPENSE	36,369	403,643	362,155	404,735	100%
NET ORDINARY INCOME	10,018	(3,796)	903	-	

2025 Memorial Endowment Proposed Budget

Our Legacy Treasurer announced our budget on Sunday, 01/05 which was determined by funds available on 12/31/24.

\$8,066 is the Legacy Budget for 2025.

Blessings, Dick Bolin (619) 422-2475

Communications and Marketing Report

YouTube and the Website - All our worship services are “live” on YouTube now, reaching members of the congregation who aren’t on Facebook or part of the Facebook group. We switched from Facebook to YouTube in May. If you watch the service from YouTube, you can turn on closed captions which help if you’re having trouble hearing the service. We use the YouTube channel as our “online worship” page on the website.

Online Worship – We average 3-5 weekly viewers live on YouTube. Our views of the recorded service on YouTube are often over 100 per week. We are still serving enough people online that it seems important to offer the online option.

If you’re travelling, or homebound or recovering from illness, or if you live out of the area, it’s nice to know you can still watch a service at home at any time or go back to hear a sermon a second time or listen to a favorite hymn again.

Facebook Group – Our private Facebook Group has gone from 446 members to 463 members this year. We use the page to share important announcements & photos of events.

Our Email Newsletters –We have steady readership each week. The newsletters share prayers and prayer quilts, share information about our many events, Angel Tree, monthly gardening, men’s breakfast and Bible study, and for hearing from the Legacy Committee, Council and Pastors. We’ve also been able to get contact information updated, take votes and surveys and to share music, pictures and fun! We welcome submissions from anyone. It’s really been a great way to stay connected as a congregation!

Dedicated Audience –We send our weekly email to an average of 229 subscribers. About 106 of those readers open almost every email from St. Mark’s, another 28 open more than half of the newsletters. We send information about concerts and special programs to 103 local media and other churches. We have been getting a listing in the Union Tribune in the Community Calendar regularly because of that. Thank you to all the people who send in submissions every week, especially Pastor Karla, Pastor Alicia, Chris Lewis, Sheri Barker, Roz Nelson and Cindy in the office. Thank you to Bob Lechner, Sheri Barker, Dorothy Geier and James Jerpseth for sending newsworthy photos!

Printed Newsletters – We also send out a printed copy of the news once a month to anyone who doesn’t have email or who has requested to receive the news by mail. We’ve tried to pack a lot into the printed version and to make them meaningful.

Spanish Newsletters – We also send out a Spanish translation of the newsletter by mail to the Hispanic Ministry members once a month. Many thanks to Cindy for doing the translation, as well as copying and mailing both English and Spanish printed newsletters!

Our Website – is at stmarkschulavista.org The website got a 70th Anniversary facelift with the 70th Anniversary logo and branding colors. A website is how our neighbors find out about our church and what we offer. Pastor Karla and I have a date to go through it in the new year and update outdated information.

Online Presence – St. Mark’s has a LinkedIn page and we also have a public “information” page for the church on Facebook.

The website, YouTube, google maps, yelp, listing in Chula Vista Chamber of Commerce, SD Reader online, YellowPages.com, church.org, churchfinder.com and faithstreet.com continue to help with our outreach.

These websites come up in search when you look for St. Mark's Chula Vista. All of them (except the website) are free listings, no cost to St. Mark's.

Pictorial Directory – In conjunction with our 70th Anniversary we took pictures and collected information from members and published an updated Directory and Yearbook which includes email and cell phone numbers. It's been over 10 years since we published the last one. We've used the information to update our church database too.

Marketing - Research shows that millennials with their young families shop for a church online and it's important to look like the church that we want to be and to be in the places they're looking. However, word of mouth is the best marketing! Thank you for sharing your love of St. Mark's and inviting friends and neighbors to join you for worship and events here.

Respectfully submitted
Debbie Lechner

Legacy and Memorial Endowment Fund Report

The Legacy Committee is ready to receive your gifts and add to the Endowment Fund! Add to the Legacy of our Church by helping to fund the following types of beneficiaries:

- Church member projects/ministries
- Community projects/charities (within communities served by congregation)
- Church at large (statewide, nationwide, worldwide)

2023 members were:

Dick Bolin – Chairman

Sharon Martin – Secretary

Janet Collins – Treasurer

Doug Essex – Member

Skip Knudsen - Member

The Distribution Policy, per the bylaws, is as follows:

- The Committee is limited to an annual distribution of 4% of the Fund balance, defined by the account balance as of December 31 of the previous year, which includes all interest, dividends, realized/unrealized capital gains from the previous year.
- A grant application will be available for requests. Recipients will be determined by the Legacy Committee.
- The Committee is not limited in its use of the distribution for ministry to its congregation. The Committee may share up to 25% of the distribution with the following recipients: our synod, ELCA Churchwide ministries, ELCA-related ministries, or all other non-Lutheran charities within the San Diego area.

This past year:

- We met monthly to review Grant Application requests and to discuss Legacy Planning and opportunities.
- We received contributions from several families within our Church. These were applied to the principal balance of the Endowment Fund and will assist our Church and our local community in the upcoming years.
- We conducted Temple Talks indicating the importance of contributing to the Legacy Fund.

2024 approved Budget was \$7,229 which was distributed as follows:

- **\$500 for St. Mark's Senior and Sunday Luncheon in Mid-year**
- **\$500 for Book Grant for Gavin Betten**
- **\$1,250 for St. Mark's Youth to National Youth Gathering Convention**
- **\$2,000 for 70th St Marks Anniversary Celebration**
- **\$2,000 for St. Mark's Evangelism and Posada Lunch**
- **\$979 for St. Mark's Sunday and Senior Luncheons End of year**

Respectfully Submitted by Dick Bolin, Chairman

Lutheran World Relief Quilters Ministry Report

Quilt Sale \$750 – Donated to Lutheran World Relief

Shipping \$250

76 Quilts shipped

94 Quilts made

Concert Sales Results – Donated to Lutheran World Relief

Number of Quilters – 4 persons

We meet on Wednesday and Thursday 10am – 12pm

Betty Ren / LWR Quilters

Media Tech Team Report

The Media Tech team is exceptionally busy on Sunday morning. They are responsible for sound and slides in the sanctuary during both services, as well as sound, video and broadcast for the online services. We have worked hard to keep up and to train three new high school students to manage the productions: David Hernandez, Daniel Alinado, and Isaiah Aguirre.

The Senior Techs have been Andrew Vargas (since 2020) and Nathan Estrada (since 2021). Andrew is in his senior year at San Diego State and will graduate with an engineering degree in June; he has an internship in addition to his schooling.

As a result, he resigned from the St. Mark's team on September 29, after supporting all the events for our amazing 70th Anniversary celebration. We will seriously miss Andrew's leadership and dedication to St. Mark's.

Nathan was out sick for most of the summer and re-established his leadership role at the end of October. We are seeking another tech-savvy media tech, to ensure there is strong leadership in case Nathan leaves next year, as he will be entering his senior year at San Diego State. Nathan is especially important since he understands all aspects of the media tech booth down to the wiring and the fine aspects of operations for all our digital devices. We praise God for his continued commitment to St. Mark's media tech responsibilities. We are actively seeking another senior tech with a passion for electronics to fill out our team and ensure that we have strong leadership who can keep our digital audio and video system working at peak capacity.

In 2024, we invested in two new handheld microphones and a new body pack for a lavalier microphone. This gives us 6 handheld microphones and 6 lavalier microphones for a total of 12, dramatically increasing our capacity in the sanctuary for multiple speakers and singers.

Sheri Barker & Jason Chase

Member Care Ministry Report

Congratulations to our St. Mark's family for continuing to care about each other, which includes praying for each other, noticing when someone is absent from church and contacting them, listening, visiting, providing a ride, sending a card, bringing a meal, etc. God definitely lives in your hearts!! Thank you and we appreciate your letting our pastors or someone on the Member Care Team know when you or any other member is hospitalized or ill.

As was mentioned last year, it's important that the church office has an emergency contact person for each of us members. If you can't be reached, then we know who to contact to make sure you're ok or determine that you need a visit or whatever.

It continues to also be important that each of us inform our family about our end-of-life preferences: Do you want a service at church? What do you want to have happen to your belongings, including your savings, your house, etc? Perhaps you want to include the Legacy Fund, etc. Everything we have belongs to God—we just use it while we're here.

Early December we offered a time to write & sign Christmas cards for our homebound. These were delivered along with a plant and banana bread to those living in the area and they were mailed to those out of the area.

The Member Care Team meets monthly; usually the first Monday of the month at 11:00 in the Lower Level. We begin and end with prayer. We lovingly share our contact information and how we can better support the church family. We don't want anyone to "fall through the cracks." If you have any ideas or suggestions that would make life better/easier for our St. Mark's family, please share that with this team. We welcome new members!

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy Geier/Member Care

Music Report

This has been an amazing and beneficial season, and we are looking forward to supporting our congregation and community through Music and the Arts.

I would like to extend a personal note of thanks and appreciation to my Concert Series Planning Team including Karen Wilkins, Deb Lechner, Tom Larsen, Dave Barker, Dr. Bruce Mansfield & Pastor Karla. I would also say a big thank you to Jane Gerber for sharing her edible creations and her spirit of giving. To Sheri Barker for her inexhaustible knowledge and for being the best sounding board for ideas. To Deb Lechner for her combination of talent, tech savvy and patience. To Cindy, the “most” in every area—and a truly compassionate friend.

To Denny & Walt for all the unseen “maintaining” you’ve helped me with during the past 3 seasons. And our Audio/Visual guys: Nathan, David, Daniel and Isaiah; every service & concert sounds & looks better than the last.

In addition to our concert series, I am very proud of the Comfort & Care Program Pastor Karla, and I have created with the creative talents of Margaret Gaillard, Marcia Salvestrini, Billy Cox, Angie Mulder, Nathan Estrada, and Tom Larsen.

I am also incredibly grateful to Spanish musicians for all the Time and talents given so freely including Marguerite & Manuel Alvarez, Gloria Cortez, Laura Marquez & my buddy on bass, Gabriel.

And finally, a huge hug and thanks to all our Concert Series Benefactors. You have brought this gift it's life for our congregation and community.

ST. MARK'S CONCERT SERIES 2023 – 2024 Season

9/9/23. Sat. @ 3pm - 1st Arts Workshop “Church Hymns”
10/14/23 Sat. @ 3pm - Latin Concert “La Luna y La Estrellas”
11/11/23 Sat. @ 3pm - “If I Sing” Angie Mulder & Jason Chase
1/13/24 Sat. @ 3pm - 2nd Arts Workshop - AMT: Part 1 1890 – 1950
2/24/24. Sat. @ 3pm - Guest Solo Artist – Violinist Emil Luxemburg
4/13/24 Sat. @ 3pm - 3rd Arts Workshop *AMT: Part 2 1950 – Present*
5/4/24 Sat. @ 3pm - Guest Ensemble Concert. *Musica Nova Antiqua*
6/29/24 Sat. @ 3pm - Season Finale Organ & Piano Duet Concert

ST. MARK'S CONCERT SERIES 2024 – 2025 Season

9/5/24 Sat. @ 3pm - Lutheran World Relief Quilters Concert
11/9/24 Sat. @ 3pm - PLNU Jazz Band
12/14/24 Sat. @ 3pm - Posada & Latin Concert
12/21/24 Sat. @ 3pm - SoCal Damekor Women’s Ensemble.
2/8/25 Sat. @ 3pm - Courtly Noyse
4/5/25 Sat. @ 3pm - Musical Theatre Workshop. “The Grandest”
5/10/25 Sat. @ 3pm - St. Mark’s Church-wide Youth Concert
6/29/25 Sat. @ 3pm - 3rd Annual Organ & Piano Patriotic Concert

Jason Chase, Music Director

Mutual Ministry

During 2024, the Mutual Ministry team met four times: February 4, May 5, August 4, and November 3. The team is established in our constitution as one of the Congregation Committees (C13.04), and is responsible for, but not limited to:

- Strengthening the mutual ministry of all the baptized, including the members of the congregation and staff, by listening and clarifying, sharing and communicating, reviewing and reflecting.
- Affirming and strengthening the mission of the congregation and the ministry of the staff by conferring, supporting and providing counsel in order to facilitate effective relationships.
- Identifying and helping to address early warning signs of misunderstandings within the congregation and staff.

These responsibilities have been addressed through regular discussion of congregation and pastoral goals; organizational achievements, concerns and tensions; as well as intentional application of Scripture in our work. We celebrate, at the end of 2024, the continued positive climate of St. Mark's that supports our outstanding staff as well as the emotional and spiritual health of our congregation.

Yours in Christ, The Mutual Ministry Team

Sheri Barker (chair), Pastor Karla, Pastor Alicia, Doug Nerat, Erick Posada, Chelo Acosta, and Chris Lewis.

Prayer Quilt Ministry Report

The Prayer Quilt Ministry (which is ALL the members of St. Mark's and all those attending our virtual services and receiving our Newsletter) has wrapped 72 recipients in prayer quilts and love this year and we have tied additional prayers into 7 quilts. We have also tied prayers into 171 prayer pockets. These are about 4x5 inches - to fit in a pocket or a purse. Each has a metal cross inside that says, "God loves you" and there are 5 "chains" of prayers for the recipient. These are easily carried with you. We have also given 5 baptismal squares and 3 confirmation squares. Please call Roz Nelson (422-5463) or the church office (427-5515) if you would like to request a prayer quilt and/or a pocket.

Prayer quilts and pockets are placed on the altar rail for the Pastor's blessings on Sunday morning. They are then taken to the narthex and tied by the congregation as they leave the sanctuary. Pictures of the quilts, prayer pockets and squares are in the Newsletter each week with the prayers being asked for. We ask for actual ties if you are in the church, or your virtual ties if you are at home or visiting our website.

We are a small group working in our homes and really welcome (and need) others who would like to sew or put ties into our quilts to join us working in their homes. Call Roz or talk to her before or after services if you would like to be part of the PQM - sewing, putting ties in, or pinning quilts together.

We are thankful for your love, your prayers, and your donations of time, materials, and money. Donations need to be designated to the Prayer Quilt Ministry. If you are writing a check, it should be made out to St. Mark's and designated to the Prayer Quilt Ministry.

Roz Nelson/Prayer Quilt Ministry

Safety and Security Team Report

Members: Dennis Coughlin, Al Hunt, Karl Larsen, Bob Petrin and Gerd Pfeiffer

Email: safetyandsecurity@stmarkschulavista.org

The Safety and Security Team (SST) was established in February in the light of growing concerns about safety and security of the congregation and our campus. The potential risks range from threatening and disruptive individuals coming onto the property and causing problems to vandalism and property theft.

To help us understand areas of concern and identify possible solutions, we relied on Ted and Dana Collins from Defend Security Solutions who have established a very successful safety and security program at their own church. They are also working with other local churches on safety and security. As a first step, they conducted a Vulnerability Assessment for us which identified weaknesses and provided recommendations for improvements. Ted and Dana were truly instrumental in making rapid progress with the entire project—we would not have been able to do all the work without their excellent support.

The team has been busy making progress on two key items from the Vulnerability Assessment:

1. Safety and Security Procedures

- Created a document detailing protocols and procedures to improve security during regular Sunday services and special events at church. This is now an official document of St Mark's, available in two languages (both are accessible online: [English language version](#) and [Spanish language version](#)), and as hardcopy from the church office.
- To proceed with implementing the new security protocols for both regular Sunday services and special events, we have recruited a core team of volunteers to support the new security functions.
- Defend Security conducted a training session for the team at the end of October to provide guidance and familiarize us with the tasks. Due to the limited number of volunteers, we have been able to implement the basic parts of the protocols (for example, monitoring the entrances and closing them at the beginning of the service). For more complete coverage, 3-4 volunteers are needed per service. To limit the burden on any individual member and to provide a rotating monthly schedule, we urgently ask for additional volunteers to consider joining the team.

2. Security Camera System

To better monitor entrances and perimeter of the buildings, we developed a design for an electronic security system for the campus. The system is based on cameras located at multiple locations on the campus and includes other components that will provide alerts if suspicious persons and activities are detected. The system will be put in place in several stages with basic monitoring capabilities implemented over the next few months and additional coverage to be added later. We received the hardware purchased for the first phase in November and installation is in progress and will be completed in January. We have applied for grant funding to help cover the cost of installing and further expansion of the security system.

Respectfully, G. Pfeiffer

Youth/Children Ministry Report

Introduction

This year has been an exciting and transformative year for our youth ministry. We've seen remarkable growth, both in the number of participants and in the scope of events we've hosted. From long-standing traditions to new ventures, our youth group has flourished, creating a vibrant community that continues to make a positive impact. Here's a summary of the key events and milestones that defined our year.

Highlight Events of the Year

1. Vacation Bible School (VBS)

This year's VBS was one of the most celebrated events for our church. With a theme that resonated deeply with the children and volunteers alike, the weeklong event was packed with fun activities, meaningful teachings, and lasting memories. The program's success was made possible by the dedication of our volunteers and the enthusiasm of the youth participants. Many parents shared their appreciation for the spiritual growth their children experienced during the week.

2. Youth Extravaganza

The Youth Extravaganza was another unforgettable event, bringing together youth from different age groups for a week filled with excitement, music, fellowship, and inspiration. The extravaganza's dynamic lineup of activities, including team-building exercises, worship sessions, and a special guest speaker, was designed to deepen faith and foster connections among participants. It was one of the highlights of our year and a testament to the energy and passion of our youth.

3. First Rummage Sale

In an effort to support both our youth ministry and the wider community, we held our first-ever rummage sale. The event exceeded our expectations, with strong participation from both youth and adult volunteers. Not only did the sale raise valuable funds for future youth activities, but it also provided a platform for the youth to develop leadership, organizational, and customer service skills. The success of this event encourages us to make it a recurring tradition.

Collaborative Efforts and Growth

1. Youth Bible Study Collaboration with Glory Lutheran

This year, we formed a meaningful partnership with Glory Lutheran, combining our youth Bible study sessions into a joint effort. Every Sunday at 10:00 AM, our young people come together to share in scripture and fellowship. This collaboration has enhanced the learning experience, allowing for a larger, more diverse group of youth to engage in deep discussions about faith, life, and scripture.

2. Youth Group and Nursery Room Growth

We are thrilled to report that our youth group has experienced significant growth this year. The group now consists of a larger number of committed and passionate members who actively participate in events and Bible studies. Alongside this, our children's nursery group has grown. For the English service, we now have approximately 4 children in the nursery, while the Spanish service has seen even more growth, with about 11 students in the class. This growth reflects the vibrant nature of our community and the growing interest in our programs.

Outlook for the Future

Looking ahead, we're excited about continuing to build on the foundation laid this year. Our goal is to offer even more opportunities for spiritual growth, community involvement, and leadership development. We plan to hold additional events like youth retreats, community service projects, and team-building activities to keep the momentum going. Additionally, we aim to continue enhancing the partnerships with other churches and ministries, ensuring that our youth remain engaged and encouraged in their faith journeys.

I am available Monday -Saturday through email and Monday-Sunday through my phone.

Melissa Hernandez
(619) 874-5134