CHRIST LINCOLN











ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

MISSION AND VISION

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO **CHRIST,** AND TOGETHER GROWING IN HIS WORD.

SO ALL MAY KNOW JESUS.

A MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MINISTRIES

Rev. Dr. Michael A. L. Eckelkamp // Senior Executive Director of Ministries

This past year at Christ Lincoln has been a vivid reminder that God is moving among us—calling people to Himself, shaping lives through His Word, and forming a community committed to living out the Gospel **so all may know Jesus.** As we look back, we see a church family learning to say "yes" to the everyday ways of Jesus—yes to gathering, yes to growing, yes to serving, and yes to loving our neighbors in His name.

Our **Rows**—our worship settings—continue to be the place where God gathers us, speaks to us, and strengthens us. Week after week, we come together to hear His promises, lift our voices, and receive His grace. Worship remains the well that nourishes our faith and sends us out renewed for the week ahead.

Our **Circles**—our small groups and relational settings—have deepened in both number and impact. These are the spaces where people are known, encouraged, and challenged. In Circles, discipleship becomes personal and practical as people learn to say "yes" to the everyday ways of Jesus in community—through Scripture, prayer, accountability, and shared life.

Our **Arrows**—our serving and mission settings—have stretched outward in meaningful ways. Volunteers, ministry teams, and community partnerships have embodied Christ's love across Lincoln and beyond. Every act of service becomes a living expression of the Gospel—a tangible way we say "yes" to Jesus' call to love others so all may know Jesus.

Woven through this year has been the continued progress of **Making Room**—our commitment to expand capacity, strengthen hospitality, and create space for the next generation to know Jesus. Making Room is more than a project; it is a declaration of faith that God is not finished with us yet.

And at the heart of it all are the **Dots**—the individual lives God is shaping one step at a time. These stories matter deeply. Each courageous step of faith, each moment devoted to God's Word and prayer, each heart softened by grace, each "yes" to God's ways reveals His personal and powerful work among us.

As you read this report, may you see what God is doing—and what He is yet to do—as the Holy Spirit moves us to keep walking forward together, saying "yes" to Jesus in every setting of life **so all may know Jesus.**



> **God is moving among us** - calling people to Himself, shaping lives through His Word, and forming a community committed to living out the Gospel.

DESIRED OUTCOMES 2025-2026

01 **Determine communication pathways** that effectively and efficiently convey information in a timely manner.

02 Evaluate how we utilize resources to **ensure ministry vitality.**

03 Create a plan to **address identified workforce gaps and enhance staff retention.**

04 Take specific actions to **create a culture that is highly invitational and challenging.**

05 **Address Financial Viability** of Christ Lincoln Church and Schools (debt, staffing, improvements, captial campaigns)

WORSHIP

CHRISTMAS 2025

This Christmas Eve, we reflected on the theme "The Line That Changed Everything." History itself is divided by a single moment, the birth of Jesus Christ. His coming is the line that separates what was before from everything that follows, BC to AD. But this isn't just true for history, it's true for our lives as well. Each of us has a "before" and an "after," marked by the moment Christ meets us and transforms our story. Jesus is the one who changes everything. His birth didn't just shift a timeline, it brought hope, purpose, and new life into the world and into our lives.

4085
CHRISTMAS EVE ATTENDANCE

EASTER 2026

This Easter, we explored the theme "Chosen: I Didn't Pick This." We walked through stories of people in Scripture, like the blind man and the woman at the well, who were placed in circumstances they likely wouldn't have chosen. In many ways, we can relate. Life often brings moments we didn't expect or ask for. Yet, even in those moments, God is sovereign, working in and through every situation for His glory. But at the center of it all is this powerful truth: while we don't always choose our circumstances, Jesus chose us. He chose to endure suffering. He chose the cross. He chose not to save Himself, because of His deep love for His people. And He did it all for us. This Easter, we invited people to reflect on what that means for their daily lives, how the truth of His choice, His sacrifice, and His love shapes the way we live, trust, and follow Him.

4078
EASTER ATTENDANCE

2054
AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE

102
NEW MEMBERS

117
BAPTISMS
85 Infants, 25 Children and 7 Adults

FACEBOOK
73,251 Individual Viewers

INSTAGRAM
13,323 Individual Viewers

CHRIST LINCOLN WEBSITE
58,230 Individual Viewers

RIGHTNOW MEDIA
742 Registered Users



211 SUMNER
WORSHIP COMMUNITY

1786
FIRST TIME GUESTS

781
AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE

Why does doctrine matter? Because salvation is at stake in it. We closed the year with a closer look at the essentials of the faith in our "Why It Matters" series. We worship one God in three persons. God gives us a righteousness we cannot earn. In Baptism, God calls us His own, even when we don't feel it. In Communion, we trust Jesus' words "for you" and receive His very body and blood. In a world that shouts "perform, achieve, compare," we heard the Word of God proclaim something far greater: Christ died for sinners, and He is truly present for His people.

CROSS WALK

On Good Friday, Pastor Hutton led our annual Cross Walk through the streets of Lincoln, carrying the message of Christ's sacrificial love beyond the walls of our church. Throughout the day, members of our congregation joined the journey, taking turns carrying the cross as a visible witness to our community.

After hours of walking, praying, and reflecting on Christ's path to the cross, the journey concluded back at Christ Lincoln, where participants gathered with the congregation for our Good Friday worship service. It was a meaningful expression of faith and a powerful reminder of our calling to share the hope of Jesus with the world.

211 YANKEE HILL
WORSHIP COMMUNITY

1448
FIRST TIME GUESTS

642
AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE



This past year at 211 Yankee Hill, God has been on the move in ways that have left me in awe. I've been genuinely amazed by our high school students. They aren't waiting to be asked. They're owning their walk with Jesus, setting an example, and actively inviting others in. Several of them have even committed to a lifetime of church work and serving Jesus. God is so good! We've also watched families who had been away for years find their way back, some walking through our doors for the first time in a long while and discovering they truly belong here. And week after week, we've seen real growth as new people come to worship Jesus alongside us. It's been nothing short of remarkable to witness God at work in our students, our families, and our growing community.

JOE BERAN
211 YANKEE HILL COMMUNITY PASTOR

One of our earliest series, "Passing the Baton," proved especially fitting for a season of transition, from Pastor Scheich's incredible leadership to welcoming Pastor Joe as our new pastor. It's a beautiful reminder that even in life's changing seasons, God is still at work behind the scenes. In the handoff itself, God was at work, in the trust this congregation extended to a new pastor, in the way you kept showing up, kept serving, kept worshiping through the in-between. The baton didn't drop. It passed cleanly, because the One holding the race together never changed.



SANCTUARY
WORSHIP COMMUNITY

1622
FIRST TIME GUESTS

630
AVERAGE WEEKLY ATTENDANCE

This past year, we took several deviations from the historic lectionary for our readings in worship, but it was always a great joy to step back into the lectionary and preach on parts of scripture we are not always familiar with. We looked at Jeremiah's heartache being a prophet sharing hard words from God. There was exploration into the Psalms and how God gives us comfort and encouragement during the stormy seasons of life. We were also confronted with the truth that we are worthless worms without Jesus' mercy. The lectionary, while not always a series, allowed us to discover truths from God shared in His Word.

"There were many times that God allowed us to see Him working in the Sanctuary Worship Community: friendships that sparked from sitting next to strangers, tears shared as we found comfort in God's presence among brothers and sisters, and voices raised in celebration at God's provision in times of need. The top three ways I saw God working in and through our Sanctuary community involved invitations, lesson recaps, and loving inquiries. There were an awe-inspiring number of college age students that invited friends and classmates to come and join them for worship, sharing their faith boldly. I heard several stories from parents and grandparents sharing how their kids or grandkids reminded them of the lesson from church in the middle of the following week. And lastly, I had a couple see a young family sitting by themselves and reached out asking how they can help make that family feel loved by us here at Christ Lincoln, but even more that they feel loved by Christ Jesus. God is working in and through His people in this place!"

DANIEL POTTS
SANCTUARY COMMUNITY PASTOR

ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

This past year, between the two campuses we saw over 130 new people gather in small groups on Wednesday evenings. In our busy world, where everyone is hurrying to the next thing, there are many valid obstacles to gathering in a small group. But for 60-90 minutes every Wednesday evening 130 people slowed down long enough to pray, read scripture, and care for one another.

AARON HEDLUND
DIRECTOR OF ADULT DISCIPLESHIP

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ADULTS IN SMALL GROUPS



DISCIPLESHIP SETTINGS

More than a year into our introduction of our Discipleship Settings we are seeing people in the congregation engaging through each setting, Rows, Circles, Arrows and Dots. These are places where God makes us promises - in worship, in community, in our mission, and in our personal time with God. We desire for all people to know Jesus and experience the gifts he has for them. So to everyone who calls Christ Lincoln home and beyond - we want to invite anyone who will join us into these four discipleship settings!

ROWS

God gives himself to us through Word and Sacrament in worship, or rows. Our primary place of discipleship of Jesus is in worship. Gathering around the Word and Sacrament to worship the God who loves us and delights in our prayer and praise.

CIRCLES

God gathers us in community that is unified "in Christ" in groups, or circles. Being in groups creates the time and space for us to exercise discipleship muscles of all kinds such as; study, prayer, community building, hospitality, generosity, service, etc.

ARROWS

God uses us as His hands and feet to overflow the love of Christ in our communities through service, or arrows. We are called to love our neighbor. The Gospel compels us to go love our neighbor through various means of service.

DOTS

God meets us in the quiet, solitude of personal devotions and prayer, or dots. Seeking time of solitude and prayer is vital to a spiritually healthy disciple. Giving time and attention our spiritual and emotional health helps us engage in the other settings well.

HIGH SCHOOL MINISTRY



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STUDENTS

In September 2024 our High School Students started volunteering monthly at People's City Mission. They have served lunch and volunteered in worship by singing with the band, greeting, praying, and serving coffee & donuts.



"And just like that, my time in youth group has come to an end. What a perfect last night of the very thing that made these past four years the best of my life. **Thank you Christ Lincoln HSM for strengthening my walk with Christ every day,** being there for me in every high and low, and leaving me with lifelong memories and friendships. Thank you to my senior group for helping me grow as a person and leader, being there to laugh and cry with, have deep talks with and to also always have the most fun with. I love you all with my whole heart."

Kenzie Steinbrook
High School Ministry Student



MIDDLE SCHOOL MINISTRY



188 STUDENTS

LUTHERAN VALLEY RETREAT

May 2026

This year, Middle School Ministry had the incredible opportunity to travel to Lutheran Valley Retreat in Colorado for our 2026 Servant Event. Students worked on trail upkeep and fire mitigation projects in addition to taking part in all the best camp has to offer including the zipline, rappelling, rock climbing, and spending time in God's Word during cabin devotions and campfire worship! One highlight of the trip for many was hiking up to the top of Cedar Mountain (nearly 10,000 ft elevation) to see the beauty and grandeur of God's creation!

"These past 3 years throughout my Confirmation journey I have grown and strengthened my faith in Christ. Before Confirmation, I believed in God but never talked or prayed to him but, as my journey continued, I learned He is who I can go to when I need help or need someone to talk to because He will always listen and be open to hearing what I have to say. My small group leaders have helped guide me in my faith in God and strengthen it with Him. Whenever I had questions about God or the Bible they would always answer and explain everything clearly and in an understanding way which helped me have a better understanding of God and increase my faith. Both of my leaders have also modeled their faith for me and my group by praying for us and sharing stories of when they were in dark spots and went to God for help."

Jackson W.
Middle School Ministry Student



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

320
STUDENTS

"We saw God working in incredible ways through our volunteer leaders. We've been blessed to have new people step into the ministry. We've seen leaders return year after year, building relationships with our kids as they point them to Jesus. We've had leaders step up to high challenges in new roles. All of these leaders love well and show up consistently for our kids - while both teaching and reflecting who Jesus is to the next generation."

Amy Schmidt
Director of Children's Ministry

FAMILY IMPACT SUNDAY

At our January Family Impact Sunday we asked families to join their kids in Sunday School and serve together to bless our community! Together we made 145 cards for our Comfort Dog Ministry, 8 casseroles for the People's City Mission, 110 window clings for the NICU ministry, 186 lunch sacks for Meals on Wheels, 14 tie blankets for BraveBe, and 123 bookmarks for those who are homebound!

CHOSEN

In February, our church partnered with World Vision through Chosen. Over the course of two weeks, our congregation learned about a village in Quito Sur, Ecuador that we would have the opportunity to support through child sponsorship.

On Chosen Sunday, members of our congregation stepped out in faith and chose to be chosen. A team of four from our church then traveled to Ecuador, where they witnessed firsthand the incredible work World Vision is already doing and how our partnership will make an eternal impact.

The highlight of the trip was the Choosing Party, where each child had the joy of choosing their own sponsor. When our team returned home, every sponsor received a reveal envelope with a photo of the child who had chosen them. Watching those envelopes be opened and seeing those new relationships begin was a deeply moving experience for everyone involved.















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SPONSORSHIPS

When we introduced the World Vision Chosen program, one family's response captured the whole point. The family, with three kids, already sponsored two children through another organization. After hearing about the program during worship, their youngest daughter turned to her parents and asked if she could sponsor a child too, so that each of the kids in their family would have a sponsored child to pray for and help support. Generosity like that is not something we can manufacture. It is the fruit of the Gospel taking root in a child's heart, and it preached a better sermon to her parents, and to us, than anything we could have planned.

Paul Kasaty
Executive Director of Worship Arts

CAREGIVING TEAMS

13

Skilled Listening Team candidates who will be able to care for members in distress.

15

Meetings with members of Christ who are asking for financial assistance.

29

Volunteers bring Holy communion each month to **62 homebound members.**

28

Meetings with people from the community looking for financial assistance.



4

Teams of volunteers who host meals for funerals.

7

Funeral Fellas who volunteer their time to set up tables and chairs for funerals.



2

Teams of volunteers who make quilts and blankets for a wide variety of non-profit organizations.

"When I think about where I've seen God at work in our ministry, I don't just think about what happens on Sunday mornings. I think about the quiet everyday moments that most people never see or hear about.

I think about Jim. A few years after selling his garbage collection business, one of his former employees was diagnosed with terminal cancer. Jim has made it a priority to meet with him regularly—not because he has to, but because he loves him. They pray together, talk about Jesus, and face an incredibly difficult season with the hope only Christ can give. That's God at work. That's a mission mindset lived out in everyday life.

I also think about Tara and Shirley. For two years, Tara faithfully visited Shirley twice a month. After losing her husband and living without children, Shirley spent her later years in a wheelchair as Parkinson's disease slowly took its toll. She spoke softly, but her wit and joy never disappeared. Over time, what began as simple visits became a deep friendship. Shirley wasn't just someone Tara visited—she became family. When Shirley unexpectedly passed away, Tara grieved deeply because love had grown where faithfulness had been planted.

These stories remind me that ministry isn't just a program or an event. It's people caring for people. It's showing up consistently. It's sharing the hope of Jesus. It's loving others so well that they become family.

This is who we are as a church, and it is beautiful."

BILL STEINBAUER
DIRECTOR OF CAREGIVING AND OUTREACH









CONNECTIONS TRIP

Christ Lincoln had a wonderful experience taking 47 adults to Eureka Springs, Arkansas, September 28th-October 2nd! Spiritual growth occurred through a Tabernacle teaching, Holy Land tour, watching "The Great Passion Play," and getting to see "David" at the Sight & Sound Theatre. There were so many other fun activity stops along the way but the best part of the trip is getting to spend time with church family - growing and laughing together!

VOLUNTEERS

We want to extend a heartfelt thank you to ALL of the incredible volunteers who faithfully serve throughout the year at Christ Lincoln. Whether you're greeting guests at the door, teaching children, serving coffee, running technology, caring for our facilities, preparing meals, praying with others, or quietly serving behind the scenes, your faithfulness makes ministry possible.

Not every act of service is seen, but every act of service matters. Through your time, your gifts, and your willingness to serve, you help create a place where people can encounter the love of Jesus, grow in their faith, and experience the hope of the Gospel.



- GREETERS
- PARKING
- BUILDING LEADS
- WELCOME DESK

- SAFETY TEAM
- CHAIR SETUP
- ATTENDANCE
- CAFE

- COMMUNION PREP AND ASSISTANTS
- LIGHTING AND TECH
- MUSICIANS

"I see God working each Sunday through our volunteers! They are the hands and feet of Jesus serving humbly and welcoming all who come to worship!"

WENDY HERROLD
DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONS

190

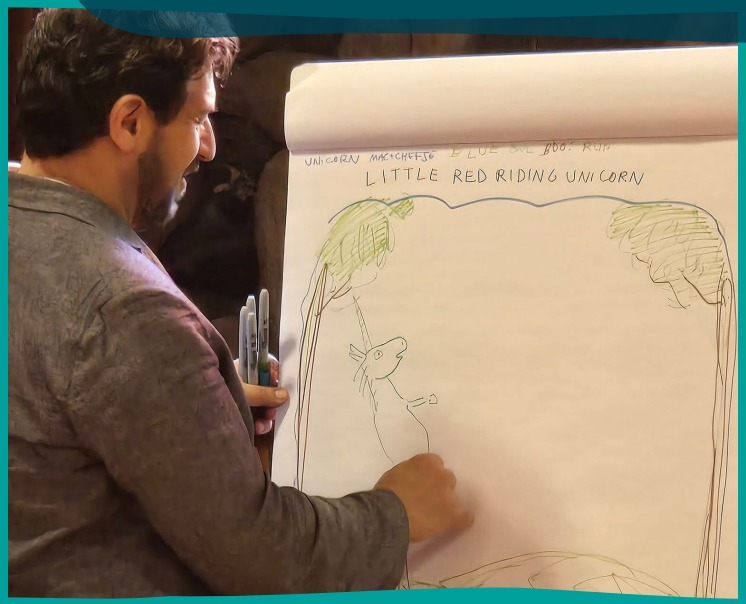
WEEKLY WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

Serving faithfully in multiple areas of ministry.

ELEMENTARY

One thing that stood out to me this year has been watching God work through our Parent Connect volunteers as they poured support into our teaching staff. In an effort to build stronger fellowship, they introduced "First Fridays" to give parents a regular opportunity to connect and grow together. During one of these gatherings, the group participated in a campus prayer walk, stopping at various locations to actively pray for our students, families, staff, church body, and community neighbors.

JEREMIAH MAJORINS
ELEMENTARY PRINCIPAL





173
STUDENTS

LITERACY FESTIVAL

In April, we were honored to welcome author and illustrator David Ezra Stein to our campus, where students were inspired by his creativity and love for storytelling. The following day, our students attended the Great Plains Literacy Festival at Messiah Lutheran and Lincoln Lutheran, where they enjoyed even more opportunities to connect with authors, illustrators, and the world of reading and writing. Experiences like these spark imagination, inspire creativity, and encourage a lifelong love of learning. These are the moments we look forward to each year!

CHILD CARE

SUMNER AND YANKEE HILL CAMPUSES

☑ STUDENT BAPTISM

One of our preschoolers was baptized during preschool chapel - it was such a special moment!







☑ ADVENT CELEBRATION

Advent Celebration in December is always a highlight that gives the children a chance to lead worship for their families and invite them into the joy of the Christmas season.

189

FULL TIME CHILD CARE AND HALF-DAY PRESCHOOL

52

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE