

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

ST. LAWRENCE EPISCOPAL CHURCH
LIBERTYVILLE, IL



BUILDING A PATH TO SUSTAINABILITY

125 W. Church St.
Libertyville, IL 60048



St. Lawrence
Episcopal Church

Annual Meeting Agenda

February 9, 2025

- 1) Welcome and Call to Order
- 2) Opening Prayer
- 3) Approval of Prior Minutes
- 4) Rector's Address to the Annual Meeting
- 5) Warden's Report (Deborah DeManno)
- 6) Warden's Report (Jenny Speers)
- 7) Update on the Capital Campaign
- 8) A note from the Treasurer
- 9) Financial Report for 2024 and Presentation of the 2025 budget
- 10) Recognition of Outgoing Vestry Members
- 11) Election and Commissioning of 2025 Vestry Members
- 12) Dismissal

FROM THE RECTOR

If the theme of 2023 was growth, in 2024 we turned our focus toward sustainability. Last year, for the first time in recent memory, the ground stopped constantly shifting under our feet. The worst of the pandemic's disruptions are behind us. I have been your rector for just over three years now. One mortgage note has been paid off and the other is almost there. The joyful shock of the two major gifts that allowed us to remain in our building has faded to a steady state of contentment and gratitude.

In other words: we are beginning to find our groove in this wild new world.

Sustainability may not be as flashy as growth, but it is absolutely vital to the health and longevity of any congregation and it is a very good sign for St. Lawrence that our circumstances have stabilized enough for us to turn our attention to this work. Our average Sunday attendance, which has grown steadily over the past three years, leveled off and stayed steady in 2024. Rather than seeing the lack of growth as disheartening, I am extremely encouraged by this trend because it mirrors the overall move towards stability that I am witnessing at St. Lawrence.

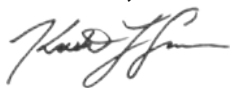
A big part of our work towards sustainability is, of course, our capital campaign. Even with the large donations that changed the course of our future, we still need this influx of funding to tend to our aging building and strengthen our ability to serve this community. A capital campaign is not particularly glamorous, but it is necessary and, in characteristic St. Lawrence fashion, you have approached it with grace and enthusiasm.

Other ways that we have been focusing on sustainability:

- Streamlining processes in everything from landscaping, to altar flowers, to bulletin production, to coffee hour.
- Continuing to prioritize raising up and equipping new leaders, especially among those members who have joined in recent years
- Approaching every event, task, and process through the lens of *"how can we make this easy and accessible, especially to newcomers?"*

The stable, sustainable foundation we are striving to build will, by God's grace, become the firm foundation for our continued growth and flourishing. Truly, nothing is beyond this incredible community and I look forward to seeing what the Spirit has in store for us in 2025.

In Christ,

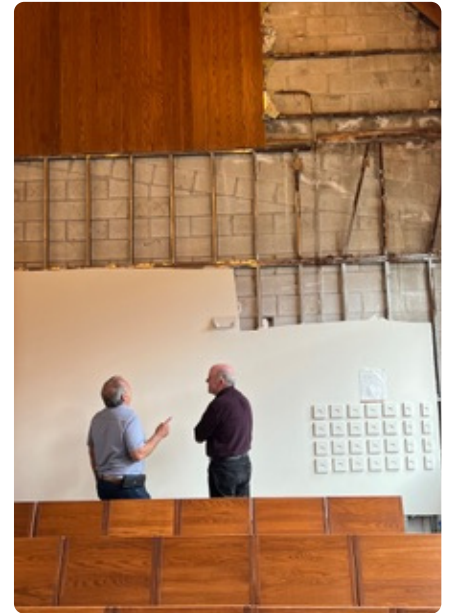


The Rev. Kristin L. Saylor, Rector



FROM THE WARDENS

In 2024 the Wardens, with the Vestry, continued to focus on the operational aspects of financial processes and care of our building. We tackled so many building repairs that a comprehensive list is too long for this report. Instead we share these highlights from the past year.



- Building repair work focused mainly on the slow steady work of catching up on maintenance deferred from when the building was on the market - and for the urgent unexpected items like the remediation of mold in the walls discovered in three areas, a result of leaking near and on the roof. The Wardens also worked with the Treasurer and Brian Bowers (Building and Grounds Vestry) to refine and prioritize the repairs list to inform a more accurate repair and maintenance estimate for the annual budget.
- Supported the successful transition in the Treasurer role, the first in about fifteen years. Careful support in this transition was important to help model future succession plans for key volunteer activities.
- We obtained a credit card from BCU based on St. Lawrence's finances secured with a bank account equal to the credit limit. This replaced the old card linked to a previous Warden's personal credit history. Having this card permits easier use for church supplies and other business with less need for reimbursements to individuals. It also allows easier challenges of any erroneous charges.
- Accepted the St. Lawrence Foundation funds transferred by the Foundation Board and deposited in a new money market account separate from the Vanguard donation. Decisions about how and when to use these funds for building repairs and maintenance is now under the control of the Vestry and tracked by the Treasurer and Financial Administrator.
- Joined the Community Purchasing Alliance to fix the supply rate of our natural gas for an 18-month contract. Together with the 2023 CPA contract to fix the supply rate of electricity, this contract helps us better budget our utility costs.

We also worked to support Kristin's efforts to provide pastoral care to the congregation as we walked with the Smith family. The February weekend Grief workshop, in partnership with Grace Lutheran Church, helped both adults and children moving through this time. Those lessons helped us again be better able to support Kristin with short leaves and supply priests as she became caregiver for her mother.



What does 2025 look like?



The biggest challenge for the Wardens and Vestry in this new year is supporting the Capital Campaign to ensure success. We were thrilled to see the number of people participating at the Campaign caller training on January 5 and hope this enthusiasm for the Campaign continues. A successful Campaign will allow St. Lawrence to make major capital repairs to the building without exhausting the Vanguard donation which can then be used to reserve funds for preventative maintenance. In this way we can use our gifts to build a path to sustainability.

Continued transparency and thoughtful, strategic decision making by the Vestry will help strengthen this move towards a sustainable future. In the fall, the Rector, Wardens, Vestry, and Treasurer agreed to 3 goals for 2025 – and it is no surprise that 2/3 are focused on finances:

- Ensure a financial records review on the 2024 financials. The last review was in 2021. This moves us closer to the diocesan recommendation of regular financial reviews and is important as we start to receive Capital Campaign donations;
- A retreat/planning session convening the Vestry and the Financial Advisory Committee. This goal will help Vestry determine long term financial goals towards sustainability for St. Lawrence. This is targeted for spring/summer, after the pledge total of the Capital Campaign is known;
- Social gatherings for the Vestry. Vestry members pray and work well together at our monthly meetings, but we have been so focused on the building and operational aspects, we don't have time to bond and hangout as a group.

Every Warden encounters different challenges during their terms – the only thing we can be certain of is it will be unpredictable. But serving as Warden is made possible and enjoyable by the feeling of shared mission among a group of dedicated and enthusiastic lay leaders, especially members of the Vestry and the Treasurer.

Deborah DeManno and Jenny Speers



LITURGICAL LIFE

In 2024, we celebrated:

- 5 baptisms
- 10 services at a local retirement community
- 12 confirmations and receptions across 3 Diocesan services
- 19 shared Daily Offices (morning prayer and compline)
- 73 total in person Eucharists
- 2 Christmas Eve services for the first time since pre-pandemic!
- The lives of 4 beloved members, from our youngest to our oldest, all of whom now rest in Christ's eternal peace
- One absolutely breathtaking Better Together Easter Vigil, complete with a baptismal pool in the narthex and a stunning rendition of the story of Noah's Ark.



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN: FORWARD IN FAITH

This vital initiative to secure the long-term health of our church continues to move forward. Our goal is to raise \$565,000 to fund a new roof, a new HVAC system, and three years of salary for a part-time Formation Coordinator. Our stretch goal is to raise an additional \$85,000, which would allow us to hire a part-time Building Manager for three years. Our Leadership Team has been working with our consultant, Leslie Pendleton, to pull together campaign materials, organize and train gift workers, and plan parish communications. 17 parishioners are serving as gift workers, reaching out to families and individuals to talk about the campaign and make pledge requests.

We are currently nearing the end of the “advance phase,” in which we are securing pledges from Vestry, committee members, and other St. Lawrence parishioners. At the completion of this phase, we’ll host a campaign kickoff on March 2, when we’ll report how much has been pledged to date and begin soliciting gifts from the whole parish community, including friends and alumni. We anticipate the campaign process will be complete by May.

Capital Campaign Leadership Team
Julia Karnstedt and Andrea Larson, Co-Chairs
Erin Armstrong
Janet Chickey
Carolyn Finch
Mary Hazen
Dave Jones
Cele Secor
Cindy Smith
Lisa Woodydy



THE HOPE FOOD PANTRY

The Hope Food Pantry had another record year, serving more neighbors than ever since its creation by a St. Lawrence youth group in 2004. In 2024, we served an average of 89 households each pantry day, up from 76 in 2023 and 50 in 2022. We served a record 132 households on November 9th, 2024! We had 590 unique households visit the pantry in 2024, helping over 2000 individuals with supplemental groceries, diapers and household items. Of these 2072 individuals, 26% are children under the age of 18 and 29% are 60 and over.

It is no small achievement that we have been able to serve these increasing numbers in the two hours we are open. Our volunteers are enthusiastic and efficient, chasing down carts outside, running to get eggs and milk, and patiently working with new families to get them registered. We would also like to thank the team of people who pick up at Northern Illinois Food Bank or meet the monthly delivery of product, as well as those who pickup donations at Aldi, Sunset, Jewel and the diaper bank. We distributed over 100,000 pounds of food and household items last year. We literally couldn't do it without you!

Thanks to an energetic demo crew, we removed built-in shelves in the food pantry and made room for new wire shelving and a new commercial cooler for our growing purchases of milk and eggs. The cooler (our 5th appliance!) was purchased with a grant from NIFB.

Another big thank you to all who donated to our Holiday Meal Box fund-raiser. It was a huge success and allowed us to purchase 260 hams and turkeys over the holiday season. I was incredibly moved and grateful for so many generous donations.

We still need paper bags, although we are trying to reuse boxes as much as possible! We will continue to face whatever new challenge 2025 brings (egg prices?) with faith and a firm belief we are making a difference in our little corner of the world. Thank you for your time, treasure and prayers.

HFDS Board of Directors

Betsy Barnett, Executive Director

Mike Hazen, President

Jeanne Lasheff, Treasurer

Julia Karnstedt, Director

Susan Colao, Director



YOUTH FORMATION

Our Better Together confirmation program continued into its second year in the spring of 2024. 6 St. Lawrence youth were confirmed by Bishop Paula across three diocesan services.

Meanwhile, our Sunday School program exploded in size. In 2024 we found ourselves scrambling to find enough chairs and produce enough crafts for all of our participants - all wonderful “problems” to have! We continue to see tremendous growth among young families and now have over 30 kids on our rolls. Our younger members have begun getting more involved in worship and can regularly be seen carrying (electric!) candles as acolytes in training. A portion of our capital campaign funds will go towards hiring a staff member to better support our family ministries and we cannot wait to see how we grow in 2025!



ADULT FORMATION

The spring of 2024 was jam-packed with formation opportunities! We began with a three part series called *Reclaiming the Creed*, ably co-taught by Michael Womack and Betsy Swank. In Lent, we debuted a Soup and Study program devoted to better understanding the Great Vigil of Easter. The series was such a success that we continued in Easter, studying the grammar of our Eucharistic prayers and even writing our own liturgy together.

We also dedicated some time to exploring the vital topic of grief. Our community has been hit hard by several losses this year. To provide support and education we teamed up with Grace Lutheran here in Libertyville to bring in Jessica Field, a spiritual wellness coach and practiced grief counselor, to work with our two faith communities. Together we hosted workshops for adults and youth as well as an experience of interactive prayer stations, all of which were well received

In the Fall of 2024, we shifted to Sunday morning formation and turned our attention to the upcoming election. Rather than fixate on partisan politics, we approached this weighty event in our shared civic life from the angle of primary emotions, using the Pixar film *Inside Out* as our guide for this exploration. The series was incredibly well attended and helped us get at some of the more commonly misunderstood emotions like disgust and anger.



COMMUNITY OUTREACH

St. Lawrence continued to be a vibrant community presence this year, offering:

- 8 Thursdays of Farmers' Market Open Play
- Many evenings spent in fellowship at the Independence Grove Beer Garden for Summer Office Hours
- Hundreds of dogs blessed at Dog Days of Libertyville
- A vibrant and well-tended demonstration garden planted with veggies and herbs to share with Hope Food pantry.
- Untold pounds of candy given out to Libertyville trick or treaters
- 400 cups of hot cocoa distributed at the Libertyville tree lighting
- \$2800 raised by Holy Crafters at the St. Lawrence Fall and Holiday Bazaars
- 11 volunteers participating in our Prison Pen Pal Ministry, ably overseen by Deacon Hal



SOCIAL EVENTS

We also had a lot of fun together!

- 4 total summer Backyard Hangouts and Fridays with Friends
- Monthly gatherings of Creating in the Nave
- The first ever St. Lawrence Day Ice Cream Social
- A jazzy Mardi Gras potluck and a cozy fall chili cookoff
- Monthly fellowship lunches held by our Young Episcopal Seniors
- One family movie night
- A joyful parish picnic, complete with a bounce house



BETTER TOGETHER



WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER

We continued to lean into our partnerships with St. Gregory's, Deerfield; Trinity, Highland Park; and St. Elisabeth's, Glencoe, focusing on:

- Continuing to support an extended family from Venezuela, providing housing, food, and social service support to 9 adults and 5 children. Over the course of the year, and with a lot of help, all 14 of them were able to transition into independent housing!
- A fully collaborative Holy Week, featuring services at each parish
- Collaborative youth confirmation and adult formation
- Ongoing pastoral support and coverage



NOTE FROM THE TREASURER

Why we don't we use balance of Vanguard Fund to fund Capital Campaign Projects?

- We have \$696,536 left of the original \$750,000 in the Vanguard Fund and the projected Capital Campaign Projects costs (CCPs) total \$560,000. If we were to pay for the CCPs with the Vanguard Funds, we would have only \$55,451 remaining in the Vanguard Funds.
- In addition to the CCPs, the vestry has identified a listing of deferred maintenance items that total ~\$250,000. The Foundation fund, recently released to the Vestry, currently totals ~\$250,000. Deferred maintenance expenses would therefore deplete this fund, leaving nothing for future maintenance expenses.

In other words, if we were to fund all the CCPs, and take care of the deferred maintenance over the next 3 years, our remaining reserves would be minimal. Our goal is for St. Lawrence to remain a sustainable church community in our current Church Street location well into the future. In order to do so, we need to have sufficient reserves so that we can be both self-sustaining and pursue future growth opportunities. If we exhaust our reserves, then we will be forced on an annual basis to find enough funds simply to keep operational, let alone pursue future growth opportunities. This would place us back where we were, prior to the financial gifts being received, hoping to survive through the grace of God with minimal reserves to support ourselves and our facilities as they continue to age.

Our goal is to be able to move confidently into the future, with the ability to annually set aside funds to address future capital needs as they develop over the next 20 years, so that St. Lawrence Church may be able to continue to thrive. Funding this goal will allow us to continue to provide for both parishioners and the surrounding community, as we have been doing through our Pantry, for the foreseeable future.



BUDGET REPORT 2024

2024 Treasurer's Report

Overall, 2024 was a good year for St. Lawrence Church's finances. We received \$14,000 more than budgeted. While we also spent \$20,000 more than budgeted, we ended with a \$16,000 surplus for the year.

Additionally, our liquid assets are at an all-time high of \$1,121,977 considering favorable investment and interest returns combined with a deposit of \$251,000 from the Foundation, which will now be administered by the Vestry.

Looking forward to 2025, we are budgeting for a reduction of \$26,000 in income considering a decrease in the number of pledgers and total pledges received to date, as well as the reduction of interest rates. At the same time our expenses will be increased around \$21,000, based upon a significant increase in salary to our Parish Administrator, which was long overdue, as well as increased Ministry Team Expenses.

Currently, if we apply our \$16,000 surplus to 2025, we show a \$15,000 deficit. We are hopeful that once all pledges are received that this number will decrease.

Finally, depending upon the results of the Capital Campaign, we will be able to determine whether to pay off the remaining \$189,168 mortgage, which will free up some portion of the \$57,000 per year obligation to date.

Carolyn Finch, Treasurer



Income Statement

Operating Budget Results 2024

	Actual	Budget
Revenue		
Offerings	375,876	375,661
Other Income	82,575	68,456
Fundraising	4,084	4500
Total Income	462,535	448,617
Expenses		
Fixed Expenses	291,317	290,920
Required Expenses	48,519	44,810
Total Facilities	33,241	20,200
Ministry Team Support	15,449	12,610
Total Mortgage	57,846	57,846
Total Expense	446,372	426,386
Net Surplus (Deficit)	16,163	22,231



Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2024

Assets	
Cash and Money Market	523,016 (251,703 Foundation)
Savings and CDs	445,294
Pre-Paid Expense	6,678
Investment	146,359
Total Liquid Assets	1,121,977
Original Building	1,360,000
Building Expansion	3,383,814
New Classroom/Kitchen	69,560
Permanent Sign	35,449
Total Fixed Assets	4,848,823
Total Assets	5,970,800
Liabilities	
Federal Withholding	1,608
Pre-Paid Pledge	20,040
Security Dep/Bldg Use	6,105
\$1 Mln Mortgage Note	189,168
Fund Principal	4,304,050
Total Restricted Funds	1,449,829
Total Liabilities, Fund Principal	
Restricted Funds	5,970,800



2024 Actual vs 2025 Budget

	Actual	Budget
Revenue		
Offerings	375,876	356,487
Other Income	82,575	75,172
Fundraising	4,084	4,500
Total Income	462,535	436,159
Expenses		
Fixed Expenses	291,317	317,028
Required Expenses	48,519	47,050
Total Facilities	33,241	22,000
Ministry Team Expenses	15,449	23,500
Total Mortgage	57,846	57,846
Total Expenses	446,372	467,424
Net Surplus (Deficit)	16,163	(31,265)



Stewardship Campaign Results

	2023	2024	2025
Total Pledge	358,831	346,661	329,987
Total Pledges	70	75	72
Average Pledge	4,643	4,542	4,583
Median Pledge	2,550	2,664	2,400
New Pledgers	4 (6)	2 (5)	5(8)



THANK YOU

Our life together would not be possible without the tireless effort of our many, dedicated volunteers. It is an honor to say thank you and farewell to the following people, who are stepping down from their ministry roles:

Deborah DeManno (warden)
Piper Hodson (vestry)



Our Mission:

Growing relationships, serving in community,
empowered through worship.

Our Vision:

A vibrant, engaged community feeding those who hunger in body, mind
or spirit, celebrating God's love and offering a spiritual home for all.

Our Promise:

Wherever you are in your spiritual journey,
St. Lawrence welcomes you. We celebrate diversity and,
following Jesus' example embrace ALL God's children.

As a community, we cherish your uniqueness as God has made you:
across cultural backgrounds, skin color, citizenship/immigration status,
political views, age, gender identity/expression/attraction, marital and
economic status, and physical and cognitive abilities.

Whoever you are, whomever you love,
wherever you are from, WE WELCOME YOU!



St. Lawrence
Episcopal Church

125 W. Church St.
Libertyville, IL 60048
847.362.2110 stlawrencechurch.org

