



# LAKEVIEW UNITED CHURCH

CHRIST CENTRED • LOVE FILLED • SPIRIT GUIDED • MISSION FOCUSED

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Dear friends

First, I would like to say thank you if you have been supporting our church financially and/or with your time and skills. If you are new to Lakeview, then this is an opportunity to become more engaged with the life of the congregation as we seek to be followers of Jesus and bring about God's realm here on earth. If you are a long-time supporter of the church, this is an opportunity to review your commitment and to be deliberate about your support in 2025.

Financial giving from you, the congregation, in 2024 is up substantially from 2023. We began receiving monthly lease payments in January from SaskTel for the use of our tower for 5G antennas even though the work has yet to be completed. Also, we have professional tenants using two of our offices on the upper floor of the gym as part of our community HUB project, This has allowed us to move closer to a balanced budget but we will still end the year slightly in the red.

Here are some highlights in our congregational life in 2024:

- We hosted YQR Connections for 2SLGBTQI+ youth and a Pride Prom for high school 2SLGBTQI+ graduates from all over Regina
- We continue to run a trans parents support group
- We organized two Seniors Planning Ahead series of presentations with financial help from a New Horizons for Seniors grant. Many volunteers from the congregation enabled this to be a great success
- We continue to make improvements to our ability to stream services on-line and are about to implement a new system that will provide better sound and video and more reliable streaming
- Our music ministry includes our choir, a praise band and the occasional soloist in addition to regular contributions from our music director, Nathan Pylypuk.
- We continue to support the Mission and Service Fund which is vital to mission work and social justice beyond our local community.
- We provide a number of outreach projects which focus on needs in Regina.

Again, thank you for helping to make all this possible.

Available online is a financial form and a time and talents form for you to complete for your own purposes as we approach 2025. If you are willing to share it with the church, please return it to the church by December 31, 2024. Your financial commitment is seen only by our envelope secretary, Doug Keam, and is kept in confidence. As treasurer, I don't see individual commitment forms or actual givings. We store your information in QuickBooks software which is password protected on a password protected PC with internet security software in a locked office so your personal financial information is safe and kept confidential.

If you return the time and talents form, we will collate the information and try to follow-up with you, if you want to be involved in some new service or program in 2025. Also, you can always contact the church office and get directed to the right person.

We are still working on a budget for 2025. We wish Bishop Carla well in her new role with the ELCIC Eastern Synod but now we are in the process of finding a new minister which is producing uncertainty in ministry costs for 2025. For budgeting purposes, we will assume our 80% share of the salary and benefits of a full-time minister with Yellow Grass United Lutheran Partnership. We are very grateful to Rev. Cheryl Toth for helping us with ongoing ministry to help bridge the gap until a new minister is in place. Our insurance costs are set to rise dramatically in 2025 as a result of a recent appraisal of our building which increased the replacement cost from \$8 million to about \$14 million! Also, we know our utilities will increase, especially the cost of natural gas. Finally, we also plan to make cost of living adjustments for staff compensation.

So what are your options for supporting our ministry financially?

- Open collection – always gratefully received but you do not get a tax receipt
- Offering envelopes – a good option if you plan to attend worship most weeks of the year. Everything you give this way goes to our mission less the cost of the envelopes (~\$10) and you will get a tax receipt for the full amount donated
- PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittance) – a monthly debit on the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month from your bank account which costs the church \$0.50 per debit no matter how much or how little you give each month. It is possible to do PAR via credit card but depending on the card, the cost to the church could be over 2% of your donation. Likewise, you will receive a tax receipt early the following year.
- E-transfers – if you have a banking package or free e-transfers, the total amount you transfer is received by the church. So long as we have your contact information, you will receive a tax receipt for the total of the transfers during the year.
- Post-dated cheques to be cashed through the year – you will receive a tax receipt for the total given during the year. The church receives all of your donation.
- Canada Helps – You receive an immediate tax receipt from Canada Helps but the church receives less than your total donation because of their administration fee which can be several %.

The church's expenses occur year-round whether you attend regularly or not. I would encourage you to consider enrolling in PAR which helps us have a reliable income stream throughout the year. You can also set up e-transfers to automatically transfer funds each month.

What you give is between you and God so it is appropriate to pray about it and then make your decision and be intentional about it. If you are able to increase your support to help offset our increased costs, that would be very helpful. The cost of virtually all the goods and services the church buys is expected to increase so please consider that when deciding on your financial support for 2025.

So please review the material supplied here and be intentional about your time, talents and finances to support the important work the church does in our community in 2025.

Yours truly

Ron Hopkinson, Treasurer.