



# FORWARD TOGETHER

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

*"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven." – Ecclesiastes 3:1*



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LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Dear Lord of Life Faith Family,

As the daylight grows longer and brighter and as soon the creation will bud and bloom again, so too, Lord of Life is moving forward into a brighter and more vibrant tomorrow.

For over 30 years we have passionately lived out our mission and it has brought us from the old Odd Fellows building to the gymnasium at Baxter Elementary school, from a campfire pit on the church property to a building that was bursting at the seams. In 2008 we took a huge leap of faith and built our beautiful sanctuary - making room for deeper and richer connections to Christ, our community and each other through worship and a building that was available and accessible to the community and for ministry to people of all ages. Our space has been an incredible gift and produced abundant growth.

However, along with that beautiful sanctuary came a formidable debt, one that has consumed a considerable amount of our monthly ministry resources for far too long. It's time to be set free!

We ask you to continue reading and envision together a deeper and richer ministry at Lord of Life - connecting to Christ, community and each other without the burden of debt, in a building that is being cared for and with the freedom to grow and dream big for what is next!

Forward Together,

Pastor Erika Nilsen

Greg Bennett, *Campaign Chair*

**LORD OF LIFE  
LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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218.828.9374

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# FORWARD TOGETHER: A LEAP OF FAITH

**Forward. Together.** That's the heart and soul of Lord of Life. Through many transitions, from those early days in the school cafeteria to our strong ministry today, God has worked to inspire deeper and richer connections to Christ, our community and each other.

## OUR EARLY YEARS

**1988**

The ELCA purchased 14 acres of land.

**1990**

125 people gathered for Lord of Life's first worship service in the Baxter School Cafeteria.

**1994**

Lord of Life gathered on this location in our 'new' space.

**2008**

New Sanctuary dedicated.

**1989**

Pastor Darrell Pedersen began his call as a mission pastor in November 1989.

**1991**

The congregation officially formed.

**1999**

New addition of classrooms and Sunshine Room.

## FORWARD TOGETHER: THE FUTURE

We stand at a pivotal moment of transition. Having navigated the challenges of a global pandemic, shifting cultural perspectives on faith, and changes in leadership, we now look ahead with prayerful hearts, seeking God's guidance for the journey before us.

Through it all, Lord of Life's ministry has remained steadfast and strong. Our future is filled with promise—one that calls us to deepen our connection with Christ, strengthen our bonds within the community, and uplift one another in faith.

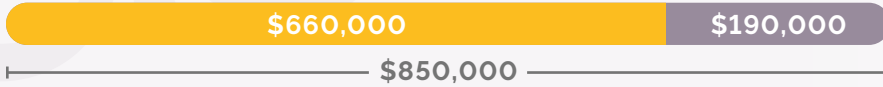
We invite you to be part of this journey. Together, we will build upon our rich history and step forward in faith, united in purpose and hope.



# FORWARD TOGETHER

\$660,000 GOAL

\$190,000 CHALLENGE GOAL



## FORWARD TOGETHER: DEBT-FREE AND MISSION FOCUSED

*"Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law." — Romans 13:8 (NIV)*

Eliminating our debt will free Lord of Life to dream God-sized dreams for the future.

Right now, we dedicate \$3,316 per month—nearly \$68,000 per year—toward our \$580,000 mortgage. Imagine the impact if those funds were directed entirely to ministry.

Without mortgage payments, we could:

- ✓ Invest in children and family ministry
- ✓ Expand mission trip opportunities for youth and adults
- ✓ Nurture a culture of grace and generosity
- ✓ Dream even bigger for what God has in store

The opportunity to pay off our debt is within reach, and together, we can make it happen. Imagine the joy of knowing that every dollar given goes directly to mission and ministry.

### LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH CAPITAL CAMPAIGN STEERING COMMITTEE

Greg Bennett  
CAMPAIGN CHAIR

Kurt Porter  
HONORARY CHAIR

Sarah Speer  
INFORMATION TEAM CHAIR

Greg Parks  
INSPIRATION TEAM CHAIR

Andrew Rangen  
INVITATION TEAM CHAIR

Katy Kelm  
SPECIAL EVENTS TEAM CHAIR

Rev. Erika Nilsen  
PASTOR

# FORWARD TOGETHER: A BUILDING SERVING OUR MISSION

In 1999, with the help of dedicated volunteers, we added classrooms, offices, and the Sunshine Room to nurture the faith of our children and youth. These spaces have become havens where young people experience God's love, build connections, and grow in their faith.

However, time has taken its toll. Summers are stifling without air conditioning, and winters are chilly due to rotting windows and frames. These challenges limit our ability to fully use these spaces year-round.

By stepping **Forward Together**, we can make essential updates—including a modern HVAC system, new windows, and necessary repairs—to create comfortable, energy-efficient spaces. These improvements will allow us to expand our programming and continue providing a safe, nurturing, and faith-filled environment for the next generation.

Together, we can ensure our facilities reflect our mission and serve our children and youth for years to come.

## FORWARD TOGETHER: WELCOMING ALL

*“Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” – Romans 15:7 NIV*



From our first days as a ministry, Lord of Life Lutheran Church has reached out to welcome all. As we meet our challenge goal for the capital campaign, Lord of Life will work to eliminate barriers that limit accessibility in our space.

Power-assisted entry doors will make it easy for everyone to enter our community of faith and worship and learn together.

Improving the sound system will allow all people to fully engage in worship, both in-person and online. A consultant will educate us on the most impactful steps to take, which could include screens, speakers, sound-dampening systems, assistive technology, and/or soundboards. Not to mention a more user-friendly system will expand the pool of volunteers able to help out during worship.

As Lord of Life steps **Forward Together**, we will ensure that our space welcomes all.

# FORWARD TOGETHER: OUR COMMITMENT

Please prayerfully consider joining hands with others in the **Forward Together** campaign.

Our first goal is to raise \$660,000 to move forward together, debt-free and to enhance our spaces for our children and youth.

When we accomplish that, we propose a \$190,000 challenge goal (for a total of \$850,000) to move forward together to welcome all to this space we have loved so well for 30 years.

We can reach this goal as we each do our part. Prayerfully consider your capacity to give to help our community of faith to move forward together.

Please consider two gifts to Lord of Life as part of this appeal:

## A Three-Year Commitment - Capital Campaign

First, we invite your gift to the **Forward Together** campaign. Your contribution can be spread over the next three years. As you consider your participation, the following tables may be helpful.

## One-Year Commitment - Annual Fund

Second, please consider a modest increase to your one-year annual ministry gift for the 2025 calendar year to Lord of Life. This gift supports ongoing ministries in our congregation, our community, and beyond.

### Commitment Increments Over Time

GIFT AMOUNT	NUMBER OF GIFTS NEEDED	CUMULATIVE TOTAL	AMOUNT PER WEEK	AMOUNT PER MONTH	AMOUNT PER YEAR	AMOUNT PER THREE YEARS
\$120,000	1	\$125,000	\$769	\$3,333.33	\$40,000	\$120,000
\$90,000	1	\$215,000	\$577	\$2,500.00	\$30,000	\$90,000
\$60,000	3	\$395,000	\$385	\$1,666.67	\$20,000	\$60,000
\$30,000	4	\$515,000	\$192	\$833.33	\$10,000	\$30,000
\$15,000	6	\$605,000	\$96	\$416.67	\$5,000	\$15,000
\$9,000	8	\$677,000	\$58	\$250.00	\$3,000	\$9,000
\$6,000	10	\$737,000	\$38	\$166.67	\$2,000	\$6,000
\$3,000	25	\$812,000	\$19	\$83.33	\$1,000	\$3,000
\$1095 (\$1/day)	30	\$844,850	\$7	\$30.42	\$365	\$1,095
Under \$1/day	Many	\$850,000	\$4	\$16.67	\$200	\$600

# COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## When do my gift payments for the campaign begin?

Unless you prefer a different timetable, the payment period begins April 2025. The Intent Form allows you to specify how and when you plan to fulfill your commitment.

## How long does the *Forward Together* campaign last?

The campaign runs for three years, from April 2025 to March 2028. However, if extending your giving period allows you to make a larger gift, you are welcome to do so. You may also choose to give a one-time gift or make payments for a shorter duration.

For those aged 73 or older, donating through an IRA Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) can be a strategic way to make a significant contribution at a time that works best for you.

## Is it possible just to make gifts to the Campaign without making a specific commitment?

Yes, but submitting a Statement of Intent—while not legally binding—helps us plan for the future impact of our ministry. Every response, even without a formal commitment, strengthens our shared vision and demonstrates our congregation's dedication to new and expanded ministry opportunities.

Do all gifts to the *Forward Together* campaign have to be cash?

No. You may give in various ways, including:

- ▶ Property
- ▶ Appreciated stocks or mutual funds
- ▶ Cash value from life insurance policies or policy loan proceeds
- ▶ Certificates of Deposit (CDs), bonds, or annuities

Because certain gifts may have tax implications or restrictions, we encourage you to consult your financial advisor.

For gifts other than cash, contact: Anne Laechel at [anne.laechel@lodbaxter.org](mailto:anne.laechel@lodbaxter.org) or call 218.828.9374.

## What is the advantage of giving appreciated stocks or property?

By giving appreciated stocks or property, you can avoid capital gains taxes and receive a charitable tax deduction.

*Important: If donating stocks or property, do not sell them yourself, as you may be subject to capital gains taxes. Instead, let Lord of Life or your financial professional help structure the transaction for maximum benefit.*

## How do I make a gift of appreciated stock?

Your broker can transfer shares from your account to the church.

Contact Anne Laechel [anne.laechel@lodbaxter.org](mailto:anne.laechel@lodbaxter.org), 218.828.9374 for account information.

*Important: Do not sell the stock yourself, or you may be unable to avoid capital gains tax. The church's broker will sell the stock, and you will receive a deductible credit based on the average market value on the day the stock is transferred.*

## Will I be asked to give a specific amount?

You will be asked to prayerfully consider an amount based on the Gifts Needed Chart on page 6 to reach our goal. If every gift is fulfilled, we can exceed our goal.





*Lord of Life,*

*You are the giver of all good gifts, the steady stream of grace in which we live, and the spirit that stirs in us to move forward together. Stretch our imaginations. Expand our hearts. Grant us courage. Bless our generosity, that this family of faith might bear witness to your love and light in this place and in the world, unencumbered and free!*

*In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.*

**CAMPAIGN PRAYER**

  
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