ULC Financial Narrative



2026 Financial Position

By: Pr. Lindsey Swanson

While there are variances in monthly expenses and income, we are likely to end this year in a much better financial position than we projected for 2026! The table below shows where we were YTD at the end of October 2026.

2026 Budget (projected deficit)	Oct. Year to Date (expected)	Oct. Year to Date (actual)
-$82,148.00	-$68,456.70	$8,575.00

While it is still likely that in the next couple months we will find ourselves ending the year with a deficit, it will almost certainly be ***much*** smaller than we thought.

This is in large part because of your faithfulness in giving so generously and the work of committees to spend less whenever possible. We should all be incredibly proud of the faithful work that we have done to be good stewards of all God has given us!

Vision to Action Grant Explanation

By: Marcia Proud

We received $25,000 for 2026. As of 10/31/2026. $9,592 was spent on Rest Sanctuary merchandise and publicity. $3,340 has been spent on massage and mental health therapists fees. $6,114 has been spent on community meals for those events. Two more are scheduled for this year, and the remaining $5,954 should cover those expenses.

Spending and Giving Trends

By: Ron M. Gordon

INCOME

The functions and ministries of the church are funded primarily by pledged donations from members. From 2023 to date November 2026, annual respective pledged donations were $177,826 (2023), $273,051.13 (Oct 31, 2024), $393,515 (Dec 31, 2025 includes Faithful Futures), and $145,529 (Oct 31, 2026). For the year 2026, the top 5 contributing families pledged a total of $73,420 equivalent 49.6 % of that year's pledged donations.

Over the 2023 to 2026 period, the membership totals ranged from 58 in 2023 to 55 to date (Oct. 2026). Considering this historical record and that of the pledged donations, the income for 2027 is projected at $247,477. This includes an estimated $8,000.00 in interest income. (4%x$200,000 in CDs at MIF).

In addition to pledged donations, supplementary income is obtained from weekly rental of parking spaces; the rental of parking and vending spaces during UF's home football games; rental of the Luther house; Kaiser Center rentals (meeting space or apartment); or occasional grants for specific projects. Over the past 4 years supplementary income received was: $62,998,00 (2023); $70,848.62 (Oct. 31, 2024); $83,869.08 (2025); and $74,354 (Oct 31,2026)

EXPENDITURES

Our major fixed expenses relate to personnel (salaries and benefits) , administrative, and office expenses. For 2024 these totaled $100,706.11 through to October 31. Note that there was an interim pastor through to July/August of the year. With a full-time pastor in place, these expenditures totaled $182,613 in the year 2025. In 2026, through to Oct 31, these expenditures totaled $156,282.

Regarding the maintenance and related expenses for the properties (Church, Kaiser Center and Luther House) the expenditures were $55,108.56 (Oct. 31, 2024), $51,151.96 (Dec. 31, 2025), and $49,429 (Oct 31, 2026).

With respect to the various ministries, the expenditures were: in 2024 (up to Oct. 31.); Hospitality Action Team (HAT) $1,421.43*; Learning $174.25; Discipleship $12,258.53; Worship and Music $8,886.79, and Camps Ministry $21, 913.81. For 2025 these were: HAT $3, 638.43*; Learning $ 861.54; Discipleship $15,742.90; Worship and Music $7,836.97; and Camps Ministry $23,873.86. For 2026 (up to Oct 31) the expenditures were: HAT $1,331; Learning $262; Discipleship $9,816; Worship and Music $15,417; and Campus Ministry $8,262.

2027 Spending Plan Notes

By: Marcia Proud

As you look through the 2027 spending plan, theses are some places you will notice changes. This is also

- **General Expenses**
    - Synod covenant is 6% for 2027, up .5% from 2026.
    - Administrative Assistant position was reduced to 15 hours per week for 2027. Campus Ministry budget allows for 5 additional hours totalling 20 hours per week.
- **Discipleship**
    - A total of $4,173.50 was given to various ministries UELC supports above the 2026 budgeted amounts.
    - Some request were reduced:
    - Blessing Bags budget request was reduced and the congregation will be asked to donate specific items.
    - Better Together, Lutheran World relief, PRIDE Center, Reconciling Works, and the Rural Women's Health Project are new line items in the 2027 budget which are set at $250, which is lower than the original request.
    - Pastor's Discretionary Fund is used to help pay light bills, rent, mortgage payments, etc. for members in need.
    - Village of Hope reduced to 10 sponsorships rather than the 12 requested.
- **Learning:**
    - $1.000 was added fro congregation's innovation learning and activities.
- **Property/Facilities:**
    - The custodial service budget has increased as we hired a new service over the summer.

Pledge Landscape

By: Pr. Lindsey Swanson

While we are sitting better than expected defecit wise, we are still in a pretty precarious financial position. One of the contributing factors is the general vulnerability in the landscape of our pledges. Based on our 2026 pledges, we have created a chart to help us better explore our main income source.

	Amount
Pledge Average (Mean)	$5,209.07 per giving unit/household (Approx. $100/week)
Median Pledge (center value of our 29 pledges)	$3,600 per giving unit/household (Approx. $69/week)
Pledge that appears most often (Mode)	$2,600 per giving unit/household (Approx. $50/week)
Top 5 Pledge Total	$73,420.00
Total Pledged Offering	$151,063.00

When you look over this you will notice:

- The majority of our giving comes from our top 5 giving households, 49% to be exact. If those gifts were to decrease (someone moves, their personal budget becomes tighter, or, heaven forbid, a death) the shape of our budget would change significantly.
- In order to cover one of those gifts we would likely need approximately seven new giving households (using the mode amount).
- Additionally in order to cover the deficit budget by giving alone, we would need around 18 new giving households.

It is also important to note that our pledged offering for 2027 is currently approximately $5,000 lower than it was last year. This is certainly not a number to panic about but just to note as we look at the changes we have made for the 2027 spending plan.

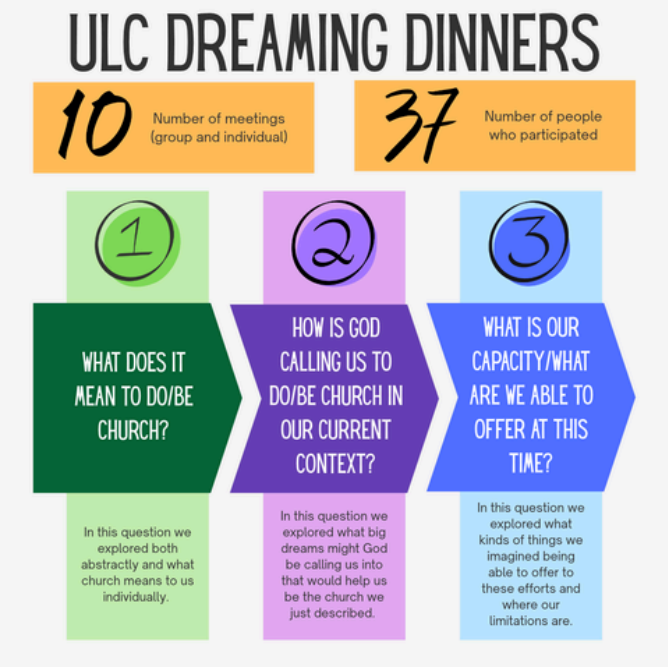
Changes Needed: Operational vs. Structural

By: Pr. Lindsey Swanson

As you can see from the notes above, we are no longer dealing with stewarding a financial landscape that can be managed by finding small cuts to the operational budget or by simply inviting people to give more. Obviously those things are still important and the Financial Action Team and Church Council have faithful done that work in the most manageable and realistic ways possible. ULC has been and will continue to be deeply faithful and good stewards of our gifts.

However, we are now at the financial point where structural change is necessary. This requires us to look for big change like finding more significant and creative revenue streams, looking at significant shifts to how we staff our ministry or how we manage our buildings, and dreaming up ways our ministries could look different and more focused on a specific sense of mission. This is the pressing need in order to truly see stability and even thriving in our budget and our community.

The great news is we are already doing that work! This is what the Visioning Process is all about, doing the difficult communal work of discerning exactly what that big change(s) might look like. We just finished one of the big steps of this through our dreaming dinners held over the last month and half. If you would like to learn more specifics about what themes have emerged from those discussions, be sure to check out the ULC Dreaming Dinner document created by Pr. Lindsey. It is a great snapshot of what those conversations looked like and everything we've learned.



If I had to venture a guess, I think it is likely that we would see a few different structural changes that were listed above working in concert with each other to walk ULC into this next chapter of ministry and faithful living.

While the Vision Process is going well so far, we still need your full engagement in the next pieces of our process for it to be truly effective! Please join in on conversations about our mission and how we might live our our values together in new ways. The hope is that by our Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 31, we will have a new mission statement to vote on. This will help serve as a measuring stick for the big changes we can dream up together!