

2025

Annual Report



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Our story so far...

We are an open, welcoming and affirming community with a place for everyone!

Our Mission

"We are called to be a generous, inclusive community that inspires faith, supports one another, and responds to the needs of the world with Christ-like compassion. We celebrate creativity and culture while providing a safe space for spiritual exploration and education."

Our Vision

"Our church identifies as a community that welcomes people of all ages, races, national origins, political views, and gender and sexual identities.

We are focused on people, worship, community outreach, music, and faith formation."

Core Values

The values that shape our mission...



Welcoming & Inclusive

We are a welcoming and affirming community, embracing people of all ages, races, national origins, political views, gender and sexual identities.



Generosity & Service

We embody God's love through acts of service, outreach, and charity, sharing our time, resources, and compassion generously.



Compassionate & Supportive

We provide a supportive environment where everyone feels like part of a family, nurturing one another with Christ-like compassion.



Faith Exploration & Education

We offer a safe space to ask questions, wrestle with faith, and grow through education and spiritual formation.



Creative & Cultural Engagement

We celebrate creativity, culture, and the arts as vital expressions of our faith and community life.

Senior Pastor

Rev'd Gary Noonan

Dear friends of First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood,

As I look back over the past year in the life of our church, I do so with deep gratitude and a quiet sense of hope. This has been a year marked by meaningful growth, honest challenges, and a continued commitment to living out our calling to love God, care for one another, and serve the world God loves. Through it all, I have been reminded again and again that the strength of this congregation is found not only in what we do, but in who we are together.

Signs of Life and Growth

One of the clearest signs of vitality in our congregation is our continued growth as a welcoming community of faith. Over the past two years, we have welcomed more than 100 new members into the life of the church.

People are finding their way here not simply because of programs or facilities, but because they encounter authentic community, thoughtful worship, and a place where questions of faith and life are taken seriously. This kind of growth happens because members are inviting friends, greeting newcomers, and making space at the table, and for that shared ministry, I am deeply thankful.

Our children's ministry continues to be a source of joy and promise. Participation remains strong, and the energy in our children's spaces is a reminder that the church's future is being formed right now. I am especially grateful for the leadership of Stephanie Schmidt, who has been a valuable addition to the team this year, strengthening our children's programming and care for families.

Youth ministry likewise continues to thrive as a place of belonging, growth, and service. Through mission experiences, relationship-building, and faithful leadership, our young people are being invited to explore what it means to live a faith that matters.



Worship, Music, and Community Life

Worship remains at the heart of who we are. Across traditional and contemporary services, we continue to experience thoughtful preaching, meaningful liturgy, and music that lifts hearts and opens minds. Our music ministry is exceptional, drawing people both from within the congregation and the wider community into worship and concert experiences that reflect the beauty and depth of our faith.

Beyond Sunday mornings, we have seen renewed energy in faith formation groups, new member gatherings, and opportunities for connection across generations. These spaces, often quiet and unseen, are where relationships deepen and faith is nurtured over time.

Strengthening Leadership and Staff

This year also marked an important step in strengthening our leadership team with the addition of Rev. Rachel Finken as Associate Pastor. Rachel has brought thoughtful preaching, compassionate pastoral care, and collaborative leadership to our shared work. Her presence has enriched our worship life and expanded our capacity to care for a growing and diverse congregation.

I am deeply grateful for the entire staff team, whose dedication, flexibility, and care sustain the daily life of the church. Their work, much of it behind the scenes, makes possible everything from worship and pastoral care to administration, facilities, and mission.

Mission and Outreach

Our commitment to serving others remains central to our identity. This year, the church has continued to respond to hunger and homelessness, support refugee families, participate in housing repair efforts, and engage thoughtfully with issues of justice and compassion. These ministries remind us that faith is not only something we profess, but something we practice, together, in tangible ways.

Stewardship and Facilities

I am thankful for the generosity of this congregation. Over the past year, giving has increased, and through careful stewardship we have been able to reduce our operating deficit. This progress reflects trust, shared responsibility, and a deep commitment to the mission of the church. At the same time, we remain honest that there is still work to do as we continue toward long-term financial sustainability.

Caring for our building remains an ongoing responsibility. Significant maintenance and infrastructure work, often supported through legacy gifts, has allowed us to start addressing critical needs and ensure that our facilities continue to support ministry rather than hinder it. This careful, proactive approach is essential as we plan for the future.

Looking Ahead

As we move into the coming year, I believe God is inviting us to continue this work with intention and hope. Our focus will include deepening care for one another, especially those who are homebound or navigating seasons of transition; expanding opportunities for spiritual growth across all ages; strengthening financial sustainability; and continuing to tell our story in ways that invite others to discover this community of faith.

In a world marked by division and uncertainty, people are longing for places that are honest, welcoming, and grounded in love. First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood has the opportunity, and the responsibility, to be that kind of church. We can only do this together.

Thank you for your faithfulness, generosity, and trust. It is a privilege to serve as your Senior Pastor, and I am grateful for the ways we are growing, learning, and living out God's call side by side.

With gratitude and hope,

Rev'd Gary D. Noonan
Senior Pastor

Associate Pastor

Rev. Rachel Finken

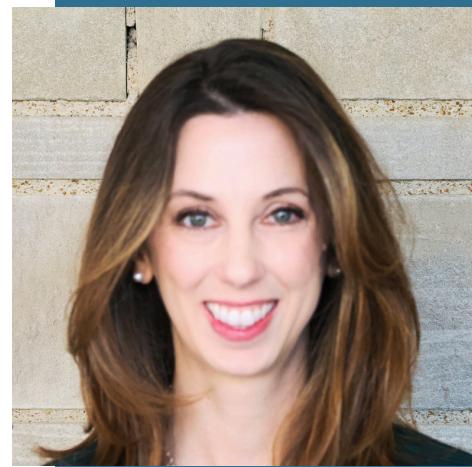
Dear Friends,

It feels like it was just yesterday that I was loading my children onto a plane to move to Kirkwood...and yet at the same time it's hard to imagine not being here at First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood. Becoming your new Associate Pastor has been an honor and a blessing. From the moment I accepted this call, you all have touched my heart through your generosity, welcoming words and genuine care for myself and my family.

In these first few months of being Associate Pastor, I have worked closely with Gary and all of the incredible staff here to learn about the varied and amazing ministries at our church, and to begin to plug myself into what God has already been up to in this congregation. I am delighted to have begun working with our Deacons along with a number of our hardworking committees: Adult Education; Membership; Children, Youth and Families; Outreach; and Worship, Music and Arts.

I've additionally had the opportunity to begin dreaming with church members about building out our women's programming opportunities, and have been working with Gary and other local pastors to help revitalize the Kirkwood Ministerial Alliance, an interfaith group of local clergy seeking common ground for the greater good.

In other areas of church life, I facilitated an Advent book club, led several funerals, assisted in worship, prepared children's sermons for our amazing kids, and preached on select Sundays. This fall I organized new member classes, and we were thrilled to welcome a large batch of new members into our church family at the start of Advent!



I have had the privilege of being able to visit some of you in the hospital, at home and at the church as you navigate health and life challenges, and I am honored to be invited into those moments with you. I pray you will continue to reach out to let us know how we can walk beside you in those seasons of life where you find yourself struggling.

Even when the world feels bleak, I feel the Spirit of God moving and alive in this church. To borrow a phrase from our Methodist friend John Wesley, each time I come in this building and connect with one of you "I feel my heart strangely warmed"...thanks be to God that grace is abundant and experienced in the daily encounters we have with one another in this place as we do life together. Thank you for letting me be a part of this amazing church; I promise to continue learning, listening, and walking beside you as we listen for God's call in the new year.

Rachel Finken (she/her)
Associate Pastor,
First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood
rfinken@kirkwoodpres.org

Membership

Highlights of the Year

- Successful new member dinner with Session and staff in March celebrating those who joined Kirkwood Pres in 2024 to March of 2025. We had over 45 new members, Session members, and staff! This was a great chance for discussion of what membership means at Kirkwood Pres as well as getting to know our new members a little better!
- Six new member classes throughout 2025 which resulted in over 25 new members joining the church.
- Update of the Welcome Brochure and Volunteer Opportunities for new member's pamphlets reflecting updated offerings at Kirkwood Pres.
- Participation in the Kirkwood Halloween Walk representing Kirkwood Pres and handing out almost 500 bottles of water and over 60 lbs of candy!

Challenges

- Exploring the connections of membership beyond new member classes.
- We have talked a lot about opportunities to create lasting connections between the new members and committee members so that membership goes beyond joining the church.
- We have continued to explore opportunities to creatively welcome our new members and provide an experience creates lasting connections.
- We are looking to engage with additional committee members in 2026 so that the connection with the committee and the membership at large can expand.



Dream for the Future

We are most excited about the growth in new members! Kirkwood Pres is a vibrant community and not only do we need to be welcoming in our process for visitors to become members, but develop mechanisms for our members to stay engaged within the church after joining. 2026 is going to continue to be a powerful year for growth!.

Community Outreach

As in past years, it was wonderful to see how the members of First Pres stepped up to lend a hand to people in need.

The congregation's generous response to any request for help continues to amaze us!

Thank you,
Community Outreach
Committee



First Pres belongs to the Presbyterian Church (USA)'s [Matthew 25 Movement](#), which has these goals:

- Eradicating systemic poverty
- Dismantling structural racism
- Building congregational vitality

Ways We Brought Matthew 25 to Life:

- Sending boxes of clean pill bottles to medical clinics in Africa
- Collecting thousands of can tabs for Ronald McDonald House.
- Preparing hundreds of breakfast casseroles to feed the homeless.
- Volunteering and meeting friends and neighbors at Greentree Festival.
- Travelling to and learning from Civil Rights sites in Mississippi with friends from Giddings Lovejoy Presbytery
- Collecting diapers and hygiene products for St Louis Diaper Bank
- Donating backpacks and supplies to the Meacham Park Neighborhood Improvement Association, to help kids from Meacham Park start the school year right
- Hosting the church's annual Alternative Gift Market in December

Highlights from 2025

- The celebration on July 13 to honor the 50th anniversary of the arrival of two refugee families from Vietnam. Members of the Tang and Nguyen families attended and shared stories, recalling the support they received from members of First Pres.
- Our annual Rise Against Hunger event on October 26. Members of the congregation filled the Gathering Space between the services and packaged around 10,000 emergency meals for shipment to Africa.
- Keep in mind the dedicated members of our Afghan Family Support Team as they continue working with our two Afghan refugee families. Team members provide support in all sorts of ways, from guiding family members through the process of getting green cards, to giving rides to work when the family car breaks down.
- Our Committee's goal is to be a resource to the congregation, gathering information about local needs that we can respond to, and helping members of the congregation discover ways in which they can engage in hands-on ministry. Our work has the greatest impact when we can help congregation members find ways to engage in personal acts of ministry to the needy and the marginalized.



Challenges We Faced

Helping unhoused persons impacted by the cold

The congregation responded to our call for the donation of blankets and winter clothing to the Winter Outreach program in Saint Louis city.

May 16 Tornado

Members of the congregation cleared out debris and trash from the tornado, and delivered food to survivors.

Food Insecurity

Congregation members continue to give generous support to KirkCare, our local food and utility assistance program, and to our Little Pantry, the food cupboard outside the church's Jefferson entrance. The need has increased by more than 30% this year – thankfully, we see the number of donated items increasing proportionally. Donations to KirkCare's financial assistance fund have increased as well.

Personnel Committee

The personnel committee is responsible for managing staff and policies per our Charter. We perform an important role in the operation and support of the church. Functions in order to ensure appropriate staffing and adherence to policies of those who perform integral functions of the church.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Selle, *Chair of Personnel* | Sue Hooks, *Personnel* | Mike Korte, *Personnel*

Highlights

Staffing:

- Reverend Linda Maconochie ended her interim time at First Presbyterian after serving faithfully for over 3 years. We recognized her at a service in August.
- We welcomed Reverend Rachel Finken as our Associate Pastor. She and her family joined us in September.
- Reverend Noonan's 2026 Terms of Call were approved in November.
- Created a new part-time position "Children and Families Ministry Coordinator" combining two positions that were previously part-time. Stephanie Schmidt was hired for this new role and started in August.
- Hired a new full-time evening custodian, Jeffery, who started in the fall.
- We continue to celebrate staff birthdays throughout the year, bringing treats on their special day.

Policies:

- Working with session committees and staff members, we created and/or updated policies for the following. The policies will be reviewed on a regular basis and shared on the church's website.
 - Anti Harassment, Anti Racism, Child and Youth Protection, Sexual Misconduct, Social Media

Challenges

Compensation: As we considered annual compensation increases for staff, we had to consider the overall church budget. We were able to provide staff with an annual increase.

Dream for the Future

Increase in budget to allow us to continue to support, acknowledge, and maintain our wonderful church staff.

Faith Formation

Highlights of the Year

- First Presbyterian Church-Kirkwood offers a variety of faith formation, spirituality, adult education and circles for members of the congregation and community.
- In 2025, the committee was reinvigorated with new leadership and direction. Pastor Rachel Finken is bringing energy and focus to the offerings.
- We participated in the First Fair that was held in October to promote awareness of our many offerings.



Challenges

- We have undertaken a review of how the present offerings represent the church and its mission, identified how other churches in our community approach educational, spiritual/faith formation and social offerings
- We are considering how topics of interest to members of the congregation provide an opportunity to build community and how that fits with the mission of the committee.



Dreams for the Future

In the coming year, we intend to bring the results of our discernment of the scope and types of offerings sponsored by this committee to life in both current and new offerings.

14

Deacons

11

11 Memorial
Services Hosted

22

Homebound
Members
Cared for

2

Blood Drives
Hosted

4

Big goals for
2026!

Board of Deacons

The Board of Deacons is made up of 14 members, with Reverend Rachel Finken as our guide and advisor. Our activities focused on Congregational Care for our First Presbyterian of Kirkwood Church family.

The activities we are most proud of are:

- We hosted 11 Memorial Services in our Gathering Space, and we provided ushers for our guests and wonderful receptions for the families and friends. We receive many THANK YOU's for this service.
- A new tradition is sending cards to families on the one-year anniversary of losing a loved one. These cards are signed by Rev'd Gary Noonan.
- We have provided fellowship to our Church's 22 homebound members through visits this year. Some visits include communion, and others involved sharing stories and even playing Rummikub! The goal is to let them know our Church family is thinking of them.
- Another activity is sending seasonal cards 4 times a year, as well as birthday cards to our homebound friends and get-well cards to members in the hospital. Poinsettias were delivered in early December as an Advent gift.
- Two Red Cross Blood Drives were held in April and November with great results in meeting our goal of units of blood collected. Our next Blood Drive is April 27th, and all are encouraged to participate.

Challenges:

The only challenge we face is getting a date to visit some of our homebound members who are "too busy" to schedule time together! (A good problem to have).

GOALS for 2026:

Additional services for the Deacons are being planned, such as:

- A check-in phone call to every member of First Presbyterian during the year.
- Keeping a list of volunteers to help with tasks needed by our members.
- Calls to families a few weeks after the loss of a loved one.
- Care-giver check-ins.

Looking forward to a great, productive year!

Director of Music

Bill Stein

2025 began with a two-month sabbatical leave, which was spent in Ghost Ranch, NM (if you have never been there – go!) and Sanibel Island, FL. John and I would spend time each winter with my parents on Sanibel, and it holds very tender memories for us. The time away provided space for rest and reflection. I once again thank the Personnel Committee and Staff for their support and at that time.

With Rev. Rachel Finken's arrival and ordination, we are fully staffed, and for the first time in 5 years do not have any 'interim' staff positions. While I am grateful for the hard work done by Rev Dr Smutz and Rev Maconochie, it was time for our congregation to have a full staff in place to meet the demands of our growing and vibrant community.

It has been a joy to see growth in our congregation again this year. Many polls and news reports seem to spell certain doom for some mainline denominations, but I am happy to say that we are the exception to that trend. First Presbyterian continues to be a place where all are welcome, questions are encouraged, and faith is grown.

We strive for this ideal in our worship life each time we gather. Our very best is offered, but worship is not stiff. The Spirit is always invited in and allowed to inspire and move us to where God wants us to be. May this continue!

In my years of service to this congregation, I have experienced countless mountaintop events. There have also been some walks through the dark valleys. At all times we have held true to our faith and our calling to be stewards of God's love and light in this world.

It is an honor to serve with an outstanding church staff (Gary, Rachel, Rob, Bill L, Megan, Stephanie, Dee, and Jeffrey) as well as the best music staff in Saint Louis (Kevin, Melissa, Lori, Bill W, Ellen, Sophie, Raechel, Debra, John, Jon, and Josh). I also want to acknowledge the hard work done all year by our committees: the Worship, Music, and Arts Committee, chaired by Rebecca Shipley, and the Con Spirito Concert Committee, chaired by Sandie Tessereau. All these good folk work tirelessly for you, the people of First Presbyterian Church.



As we move into a new year and new season, may the Spirit continue to illuminate our path, and may we always find the time and energy to sing a new song to the Lord!

Faithfully yours,

Bill Stein

Highlights

- The call, ordination, and installation of Rev Rachel Finken as our new Associate Pastor
- Our new Midmonth Music Series that debuted in May, offering monthly midday organ recitals to members of our congregation and community
- Jazz on the Lawn, featuring our very own Melissa Fyr and her trio, in September
- Increase in numbers in many of our choirs – Chancel Choir, Chancel Ringers, and Children's Choirs
- The diverse concerts presented by our Con Spirito Concert Series, and welcoming many guest artists to perform in our sacred spaces
- The Good Friday and Christmas Concert presentations by the Chancel Choir
- Collecting over \$4000 for those in need at our Christmas Concert
- My 2-month sabbatical leave in January and February, which allowed for rest and reflection

Challenges

- Gathering a wider volunteer base for Worship, Music, and the Arts activities: Hanging of the Greens, communion preparation and serving, Kirk Gallery committee, etc

Worship, Music, and the Arts



Highlights

- Our creative and inspiring worship services have helped our attendance grow this year.
- The Midmonth Music Series debuted in the spring and is a great success.
- We had an increase of volunteers in worship services (ushers, communion servers, etc...)
- We saw an increase in choir membership for both adults and children.
- Addition of the Choir garden south of the sanctuary
- We replaced several hymnals this year
- We had our first Jazz on the Lawn concert featuring the Melissa Fyr trio.

Challenges

- We have an increasing need for more volunteers as our membership grows.
- The sanctuary lighting needs updating.
- We are exploring the possibilities for a worship experience during the week. How can we expand our worship experience.

DREAMS FOR 2026:

- An emphasis on incorporating liturgical art throughout the facility
- Administrative support for the music ministry



Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministries

Rob Monroe

2025 was a good year for our ministries to young people! Numbers are important for reports like this, and those can be found in the accompanying Children, Youth & Families Report. There has been a lot of change and all of it has been for the good of our overall ministry and the church.

We thanked Becky Craig and Julie Weber for their time with Logos and Sunday School, respectively, as they helped get us through a global pandemic and then some!

We welcomed Stephanie Schmidt into a new position with more hours and a wider responsibility for working with our children and families. She has brought about a lot of new ideas and improvements in just the few months she has been in the office!

The Confirmation Class that joined in the spring was pretty large for us, and the one that started in the fall is even larger. Things are looking bigger for the Senior High program for a lot of years to come.

Work Camp took us back to Colorado Springs with 35 high school students and seven adults spending two weeks working and playing around town.

None of what we do is possible without the dozens of volunteers that help with everything from sitting in committee meetings to teaching classes on Sunday and Wednesday to spending two weeks away with loud high school students. Every hour given, email sent that invites a friend to do something with us and every conversation shared leads to further feelings that our faith community is essential in the lives of those we share these spaces with, that our connections to each other matter more than lots of other things and that this is a ministry that is blessed beyond measure.

As always, I am honored to be a part of what we do here at First Pres with our children and youth and their families.



CYF Committee

Highlights from 2025

- Staffing change to increase our ability to better engage children and families in new and creative ways!
- Aligned our Sunday School curriculum to the Lectionary, meaning students are hearing the same message as they are in worship
- Work Camp went to Colorado Springs, CO, with 35 students and 7 adults
- Logos numbers are WAY up from a year ago, including 14 new students
- Camp Kirkapresqua was sold beyond capacity, with about a dozen new campers
- New families coming to all aspects of our ministries – Logos, Sunday School, family events, Senior High Fellowship
- Sunday School Singers being included with worship



Challenges from 2025

- Finding the right time(s) on the calendar for families to join us.
- Replace and refresh Christmas pageant costumes as needed.



Dream for the Future

Family Mission Experiences

Doing More Good – we are planning to start offering service projects to families that will have a big impact on the community around us. Projects will be designed to take less than an hour and incur little to no cost to the families. We are excited about this way to live more into our Matthew 25 commitment with our youngest members!

Children's Center Director

Sherry Peters



Highlights of the Year

- Highest enrollment we've seen in recent years, with most classes full
- Three new teachers added to our staff
- New Social Emotional Learning Curriculum implemented

Challenges

- Maintaining high quality education with higher class sizes
- Balancing teacher salaries with tuition costs



Dreams for the Future

- We will be celebrating our 70th year of operation in 2027
- *Plans to mark this anniversary will be underway in 2026, possibly involving the installation of a new playground structure
- *Exploring ways to offer more competitive pay for our staff without increasing tuition

Communications Director

Megan Ligeti

Highlights

This year focused on strengthening the foundation of **how** First Pres communicates — not just **what** we communicate.

Key areas of impact included:

- Brand and Identity Development:
 - Continued shaping a cohesive visual and narrative identity for First Pres that reflects who we truly are: inclusive, vibrant, rooted in tradition, and open to the future. This included refining our color systems, visual language, and design standards so that our communications feel consistent, recognizable, and welcoming across all platforms.
- Digital Transformation & Systems Building:
 - Worked to identify a new church management system. This work is continuing into 2026 and will emphasize accessibility, transparency, and long-term sustainability rather than just technical rollout.
- Integrated Communication Strategy:
 - Strengthened alignment between print, digital, and social communications so that members encounter a consistent message and experience whether they engage through worship, email, social media, or the website.
- Innovation & Capacity Building:
 - Began laying groundwork for responsible and thoughtful use of emerging technologies (including AI tools) to support ministry, reduce administrative burden, and expand our capacity to serve — always with a focus on ethics, care, and human-centered ministry.

Key projects:

Annual Report for 2024, Church Profile for Associate Pastor Search, Communications introducing and welcoming Rev. Rachel Finken, Created new stewardship webpage and materials, Strengthened video editing skills, Designed Advent devotional booklet



Challenges

The primary challenge this year has been capacity and sustainability. There is pressure/tension between maintaining excellence, meeting immediate needs, and building long-term infrastructure.

Dreams for the Future

Looking ahead, my hope is to continue building a communications ministry that is not just functional, but formational, shaping how people experience belonging, connection, and meaning at First Pres.

Future goals include:

- Roll out our new branding materials over the course of 2026
- Building a long-term digital and storytelling strategy that supports growth, discipleship, and community connection
- Creating structures that allow communications to function as a ministry amplifier, not just a support service
- Continuing to explore ethical innovation, using new tools wisely to increase capacity without losing the human heart of our work

My hope is that communications at First Pres will continue to move from being primarily information sharing toward being relational, invitational, and transformational, helping people not just know what is happening, but feel part of something meaningful.

Respectfully submitted,
Megan Ligeti
Communications Director

Hospitality Committee

Highlights of the Year

- Confirmation Brunch
- New Member Dinner
- Music Appreciation Event
- Pancake Breakfast
- Farewell Event for Associate Pastor Linda Maconochie
- Ice Cream Social
- 50-Year Anniversary of Sponsorship of Vietnamese Families
- Recognition of 50 Year Church Members
- Christmas Dinner
- First Pres Cafe

Maundy Thursday Soup Dinner:

We worked hard to encourage people who have not traditionally attended the dinner to attend. We also added a homemade gluten-free, vegan soup to ensure that all who wished to attend were able to dine.

Installation and Ordination Events for Associate Pastor Finken:

The committee was honored to be tasked with organizing events to introduce Associate Pastor Finken and her family to the congregation and the community.

First Fair:

This event has been on the goal list of the committee for several years and we are proud to have finally brought it to fruition. Members of the church and of the community were able to see many of the wonderful groups and committees associated with our church and to talk with representatives from each.



First Fair



Rev. Finken's Reception

Dreams for the Future

Our goals for the future are to continue to provide fellowship opportunities for the members of the congregation and to continue to assist other committees with their activities.

Challenges

- The biggest challenge for our committee is the ebb and flow of events at the church. Some periods during the year are very busy and it is occasionally difficult to have enough people available to help. We requested and received help in adjusting the Fall calendar in order to space out events.
- Another challenge for the committee is balancing the role of assisting other committees with their events while not becoming wholly responsible for them. We are still working through how to best maintain that balance.
- A third challenge is the how to ensure that First Pres Cafe has enough people to bring treats as well as enough people to put those treats out and clean them up. Further, we are trying valiantly not to lose sight of the primary goal of providing an opportunity for fellowship amongst members—not just cookies. We are feeling blessed to have so many generous bakers. We are still identifying a consistent pool of hosts. To meet our needs we continually adjust the requests we are making of our volunteers.

Technology

Highlights of the Year

- Met with Tower Sound regarding the chapel wireless mic addition and replacing the rain-damaged controller. Old equipment prevented upgrading to a new controller.
- Added two column speakers to Fellowship Hall for the Arise! Service (pictured).
- AVAYA phones extensive system firmware upgrades (2).
- Interviewed Internet Security firms and added INZO Tech for group security.
- Added new 16-port switch converting all equipment to one vendor for monitoring and control (pictured).
- Added new security monitoring agents to all staff computers.
 - Added DNS and Internet security.
- Upgraded the sanctuary video booth manual.
- Began comprehensive review of Fireplace Room and Adult Ed. Room AV needs.
- Completed and posted a comprehensive inventory of staff computers.
- Began comprehensive review of sanctuary:
 - Listening devices
 - Microphones to aid in livestream audio quality
- Added new monitor to FPC Office conference table (pictured).
- Interviewed and selected a vendor for improved and segmented building's Wi-Fi to isolate the school, to isolate the staff, to isolate the open network, and added an additional WAP to the FPC office.
- Began a program to solicit and train volunteers for live streaming using the results of the church's survey. Solicited 24 and yielded 6 new volunteers. Began training program for the new volunteers. This will add to the 2 volunteers now in place and insulate the church from missed broadcasts for services.
- Conducted live-streaming of Traditional church services and the occasional special events and occasional memorial services.
- Created monthly budget/expenditure graphic (pictured).

Challenges

- Our main challenge was in finding qualified vendors to carry out the work. We used a combination of AI searches, recommendations and interviews to narrow the field to 4-6 vendors from which we selected our final vendor.
- Secondarily was finding equipment compatible with our existing inventory of technology.

Dreams for the Future

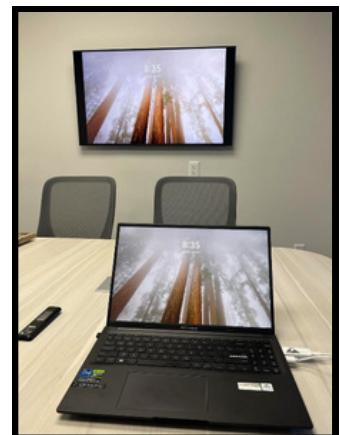
Our dream is for a much more Wi-Fi/Ethernet connected church extending to all corners. Sadly, the church wasn't built with connectivity in mind.



Column Speakers



16-port Switch



Conference Monitor



Budget Graphic

Building & Grounds

The Building and Grounds Committee is tasked to facilitate and coordinate the upkeep and renewal of our structure and operating systems. The strength of the committee is in the abilities of church members who may have special knowledge and skills related to the upkeep of our property. Some know how to wire internet and wi-fi equipment, some know how to change a faucet or light switch, some know how to rake leaves. The realities of maintaining our building and components means that the knowledge and skills of members who are willing to pitch in really helps to keep the usefulness and beauty of the property high while being mindful of expenses.

At the center of our committee is our Business Manager, Bill Larson. He is often the first to know of a problem and has close ties with service providers who fix broken systems. Our committee meets to help make decisions as to when to move forward with major upgrades. We also coordinate on matters of property cleanup days.

We would highlight the work of Lora Berthold and her recently organized band of gardeners who in just a couple of years has transformed our campus with new plantings and continuous maintenance and Roger Stream who is on site weekly during the growing season to mow and tidy up. Most notable for 2025 has been the renovation of the office area transforming the 1980s era laminated workstations and décor into a space that better suits the needs and function of a 21st century office. We made changes to energy efficient lighting, adding warmth to the setting and updated the wall colors to make the space brighter. New flooring was installed and the restrooms received new countertops and sinks. The office break room was completely remodeled to include a dishwasher and coffee station area. New wall art is hung which better represents our meaning and mission. The restrooms in the basement were also upgraded with new sinks, lighting and paint making them much more pleasant spaces.

New carpeting was installed in the gathering space as the 15-year-old carpet there had become sun faded and suffered from coffee stains. We were able to match the carpet installed in the narthex 2 years earlier.

Our fire alarm system continues to need occasional attention with repair parts becoming less available. However, in 2024 we did identify a local firm, Cintas, that has been able to provide quality economical service to the system so that we can extend its life span. So that aspect has improved. We continue to have plans to improve the exterior lighting around the chapel area. projects have been on hold pending the perception that there is budget for them. At the same time, these projects are warranted as they would enhance the nighttime appearance of the property.



Before: Main Room



After: Main Room



Before: Kitchen

Below is a list of projects B&G completed in 2025:

- Spring and Fall Clean Up days held – tree and bush trimming/planting/raking/pruning etc.
- Renovation of office area including restrooms and break room
- Completed all inspections (fire/electric/elevator)
- Church security and fire alarm improvements were made
- Three video monitors were installed around the church to provide current news
- Repaired exit signs in sanctuary
- The soffits of the awnings at the southwest area of the education building have been restored
- Restoration of the Nave area walls above the stained-glass windows was repaired and repainted
- The fire alarm system has been serviced and tested and we are enjoying our service relationship with Cintas who provide monitoring and maintenance
- Roof repairs were made trying to seal up annoying leaks

Below is a list of projects B&G is currently working on for 2026 and beyond:

- New closet near the east doors to store parking lot signs
- Improving the sanctuary's rear under-balcony lighting
- Skylight leak in the chapel
- Window repairs – south side
- Electrical repair to the outside lights
- Follow-up on roof leak in Fellowship Hall and education storage room
- Misc. church electrical and lighting

Respectfully Submitted,
Rhein Dabler
B&G Chairperson

Office Remodel



After: Kitchen



Before: Women's Restroom



After: Women's Restroom

Business Manager

Bill Larson

The Business Office at First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood in 2025 continued its focus on personnel administration, employee benefits administration, volunteer recruitment and scheduling, finances, stewardship initiatives, vendor relations, building and equipment repairs and maintenance, facility usage, Session committees support, and general office management.

Wins and Blessings!

- Launched the Volunteer Accelerator allowing us to develop a database of skills and interests of our members
- Network equipment and security improvements through a partnership with Inzo Technologies
- Successful renovation of the staff office space that included updated kitchen, restrooms, office furniture, paint, flooring, and lighting
- Lower level restrooms were updated with new sinks, countertops, lighting and paint
- Gathering Space carpeting replaced
- Contracted with Realm Church Management system to provide an updated membership management system, giving platform and member engagement that includes a First Pres app. Stay tuned for more information!
- Successful stewardship campaign with pledges exceeding 6% of last year's (with more yet to come)
- Organized volunteers for Fall and Spring Clean-Up days for the church grounds with record turn-out

The Business Office is extremely appreciative of the volunteers who do our accounting, tackle challenging maintenance projects, address our changing technology needs, maintain the gardens and grounds, and support the office operations. Their time and dedication to the church are invaluable.



Challenges

- Finding cost effective solutions to rising building insurance premiums
- Finding additional ways to close our budget deficit.

A look to 2026

The Business Office will continue evaluating new processes, staffing, and income generating opportunities for the church:

- Update and improve sanctuary lighting
- Update conference room technology
- Implement updates to our fire alarm controls
- Implement new Realm giving platform and introduce a new church app
- Develop and implement a legacy giving strategy

There will be continued financial challenges in 2026 as we navigate the year with a budget deficit, but we are making strides in reducing the gap through growth initiatives and cost saving strategies.

Bill Larson,
Business Manager

Finance

Below is a summary of key points on the state of First Presbyterian's finances. More detailed financial results are included in the Annual Report Appendix.

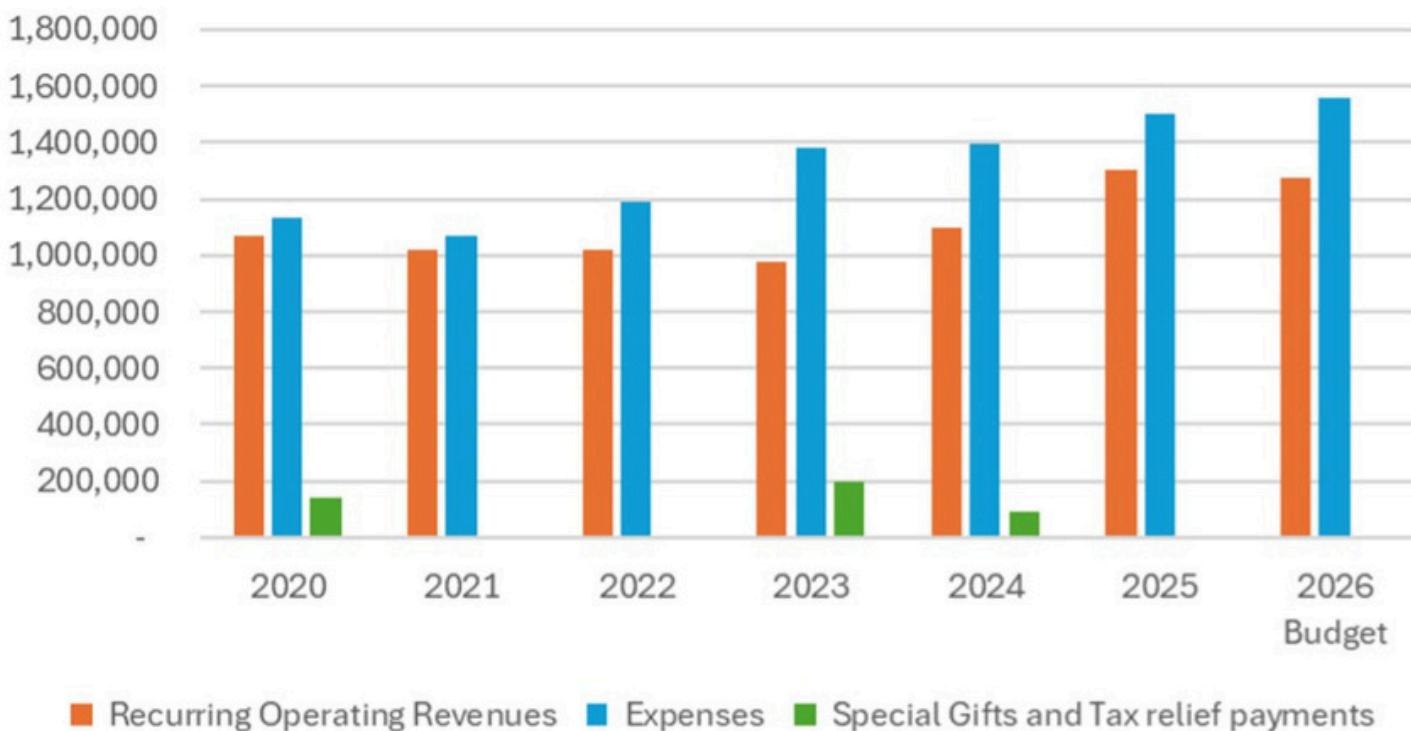
Calendar Year 2025 Summary

- Our operating deficit was \$195,006 and was less than both the budgeted deficit of \$346,009 and the prior year deficit of \$301,185. We are projecting an operating deficit in 2026 of \$285,490.
- Despite the operating deficit (i.e. expenditures being greater than offerings) the assets of the church grew during the year because of strong investment earnings and receipt of the remaining legacy gift from a deceased member. Over 2024 and 2025 combined, we received \$2,761,952 from this gift.
- The Church spent \$125,000 for a much-needed remodel of our office space, making it much more functional and pleasant for volunteers and staff alike. This was funded from our Maintenance Support Fund.

Operating Activity Trends

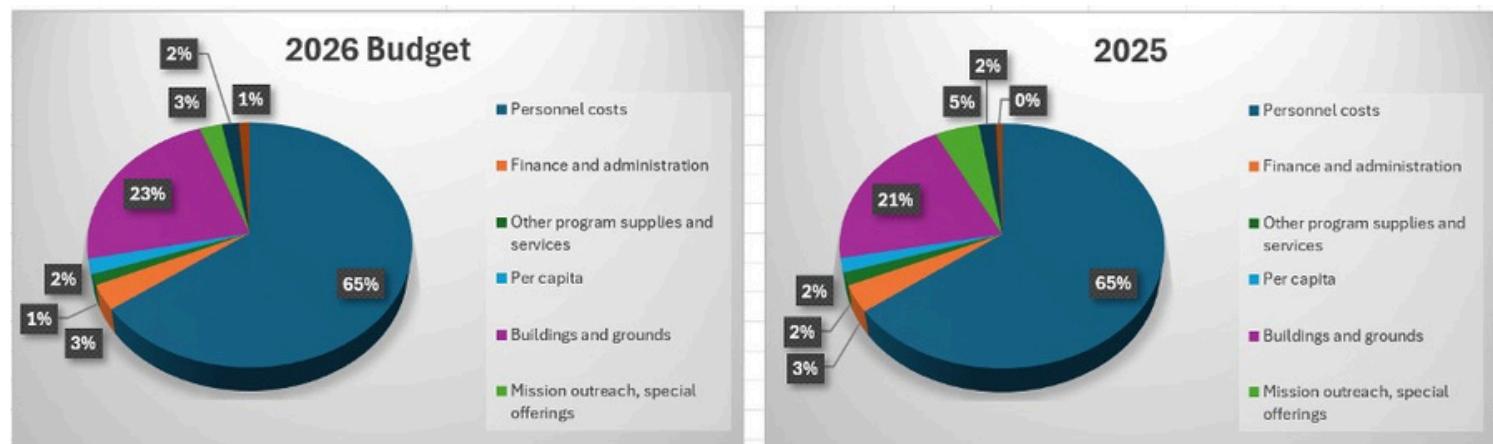
This chart shows the trends of our growing revenue since our pastor transition and also the increase in expenses as we have grown staff to pre-pandemic levels and incurred rising costs. The chart only reflects our recurring operating fund activity and excludes self-supporting activities, the office remodel, other building repairs, and investment income.

Operating Activity Trends



Church Expenses

Most of the Church expenses are related to personnel and the building. The personnel costs are the compensation and benefits for our clergy, office staff, program staff, and custodians. Building costs include utilities, insurance, maintenance activities, and supplies.



Net Assets of the Church

The net assets of the church increased in 2025 despite the operating deficit, driven by investment gains and the receipt of the remainder of a legacy gift. This gift was \$2,761,921 with \$1,694,412 received in 2025 and \$1,067,540 in 2024. Church net assets are considered unrestricted if they can be used for any purpose or designated/restricted if they were given for a specific purpose or were designated by the Session for a specific purpose.



Summary

The Church has adequate reserves to withstand the current operating deficits in the near future. However, in the long term, we need to increase annual offerings to match our yearly expenditures, while also increasing our reserves through an effective investment strategy.

Definitions

Recurring Operating Revenues represent the Church's budgeted operating revenue sources that fund the Church's operating budget and include contributions and fees for church rentals, fellowship events, and some youth programs. It does not include preschool tuition, LOGOS, Con Spirito, and Work Camp fundraising because these are self-supporting programs that do not rely upon the Church's operating budget. It also does not include investment income from gifts from estates.

Expenses represent operating expenses, including all the Church personnel (except Preschool employees) salaries and benefits, utilities, supplies, contracts, and other recurring expenses needed to operate. It does not include the direct expenses of the self-supporting programs listed above.

Special Gifts in 2024 relate to a special campaign to support Church operations during the transition to a new minister.

Appendix

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KIRKWOOD

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES - Modified Cash receipts and cash disbursements basis

YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31,

	BUDGET 2026	ACTUAL 2025	BUDGET 2025	ACTUAL 2024
Recurring Operating Revenue				
Offerings for church operations	\$ 1,231,518	\$ 1,222,375	\$ 1,116,809	\$ 1,028,888
Special Offerings	\$ 4,480	\$ 4,836	\$ 6,696	\$ 7,257
Restricted offerings	\$ -	\$ 33,673	\$ -	\$ 16,386
Income from Other Sources	\$ 23,000	\$ 27,915	\$ 22,000	\$ 23,316
Program Income	\$ 13,950	\$ 14,439	\$ 12,400	\$ 16,252
Recurring Operating Revenue	\$ 1,272,948	\$ 1,303,238	\$ 1,157,905	\$ 1,092,100
Expenses				
Personnel Expenses	\$ 1,011,889	\$ 970,435	\$ 996,081	\$ 917,513
Session Committee Expenses	\$ 13,715	\$ 22,346	\$ 21,340	\$ 22,466
Finance and Office Expenses	\$ 51,859	\$ 53,209	\$ 57,528	\$ 53,605
Building & Grounds Expenses	\$ 355,897	\$ 310,570	\$ 306,117	\$ 272,281
Presbytery and Per Capita	\$ 31,120	\$ 27,720	\$ 27,720	\$ 25,020
Special Offering Disbursements	\$ 3,708	\$ 4,382	\$ 5,878	\$ 6,441
Hands on Mission	\$ 600	\$ 34,775	\$ 600	\$ 15,906
Community Outreach	\$ 34,000	\$ 33,229	\$ 33,900	\$ 29,720
Adult Education Expenses	\$ 3,950	\$ 3,000	\$ 4,700	\$ 2,750
Congregational Nurture Expenses	\$ 4,400	\$ 334	\$ 1,000	\$ 2,240
Children's Ministry Expenses	\$ 6,400	\$ 4,161	\$ 6,400	\$ 5,049
Youth Ministry Expenses	\$ 11,800	\$ 6,162	\$ 11,800	\$ 12,439
Music and Arts Expenses	\$ 29,100	\$ 27,921	\$ 30,850	\$ 27,854
Expenses	\$ 1,558,438	\$ 1,498,244	\$ 1,503,914	\$ 1,393,284
Recurring Revenue over Expenses	\$ (285,490)	\$ (195,006)	\$ (346,009)	\$ (301,185)
Special Gifts and Tax Relief payments				\$ 90,731
NET OPERATING DEFICIT	\$ (285,490)	\$ (195,006)	\$ (346,009)	\$ (210,454)

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KIRKWOOD**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION - Modified Cash receipts and cash disbursements basis
AS OF DECEMBER 31,**

ASSETS	2024	2025
Checking account	\$ 173,812	\$ 331,479
Fidelity investments	2,416,394	3,994,453
Endowment Trust Fidelity account	998,459	1,179,836
Flexible spending account Funds on deposit	601	1,256
 TOTAL ASSETS	 \$ 3,589,266	 \$ 5,507,024
 LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
 Liabilities		
Unearned Revenue	\$ 25,250	\$ 113,363
Misc Liabilities	2,941	2,928
Liabilities	28,191	116,291
 Net Assets		
General Fund-Unrestricted	130,396	131,526
Deacons - Donor restricted	1,622	1,475
Hands on Mission - Afghan Immigration Support	11,295	10,312
Operating Fund Net Assets	143,313	143,313
Ministry Support	667,993	2,194,948
Maintenance Support	1,415,882	1,440,036
Music Support	21,850	15,266
Memorial Fund	20,558	27,326
Courtyard Interment Fund	61,593	78,654
Hollis (Landscaping) Fund	663	-
Straub (Scholarship) Fund	58,350	63,585
Poertner (Religious Education)	48,944	50,773
LOGOS	4,055	3,375
Work Camp	32,162	32,040
Con Spirito	65,444	92,030
Preschool-Session Designated	21,398	69,551
Endowment Fund-Donor Restricted	998,871	1,179,836
 Total Net Assets	 3,561,076	 5,390,733
 TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	 \$ 3,588,666	 \$ 5,507,024

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KIRKWOOD
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES, ALL FUNDS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2025**

	Support Funds				Reserve Funds				
	General	Ministry (unrestricted)	Maintenance (Building Together Forever)	Music	Straub (Scholarship)	Poertner (Religious Education)	Hollis (Landscaping)	Memorials	Courtyard (Interments)
Income									
Contributions and fee income	\$ 1,303,238		\$ 11,208	\$ 11,091			\$ 3,980	\$ 11,250	
Investment income		\$ 27,942	165,109	2,215	7,335	6,171	76	2,788	8,287
Legacy and Transition Gifts		1,694,411							
Total Income	1,303,238	1,722,353	176,317	13,306	7,335	6,171	76	6,768	19,537
Expenses	1,498,244	5,473	152,163	19,890	2,100				2,476
Income over (under) expenses	(195,006)	1,716,880	24,154	(6,584)	5,235	6,171	76	6,768	17,061
Transfers between funds	195,006	(189,925)				(4,342)	(739)		
Change in Net Assets	-	1,526,955	24,154	(6,584)	5,235	1,829	(663)	6,768	17,061
Beginning balance	143,313	667,993	1,415,882	21,850	58,350	48,944	663	20,558	61,593
Ending balance	\$ 143,313	\$ 2,194,948	\$ 1,440,036	\$ 15,266	\$ 63,585	\$ 50,773	\$ -	\$ 27,326	\$ 78,654
For budgeted operations	The Support Funds are used as backup resources for the indicated purpose outside the normal budget.				The Reserve Funds are restricted for: Straub - scholarships, Poertner - continuing education for ministry, Hollis - landscaping, Memorial - special projects funded by memorial gifts, Courtyard - for interment costs and courtyard care.				

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KIRKWOOD
STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES, ALL FUNDS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2025**

	Self-Supporting Activity Funds			Preschool (Self Supporting)	Endowment Trust (Separate legal entity)	2025 Total	2024 Results
	Work Camp	Logos	Con Spirito				
Income							
Contributions and fee income	\$ 46,965	\$ 2,955	\$ 70,784	\$ 248,234	\$ 1,650	\$ 1,711,355	\$ 1,687,556
Investment income					179,315	399,238	336,978
Legacy and Transition Gifts						1,694,411	1,158,271
Total Income	46,965	2,955	70,784	248,234	180,965	3,805,004	3,182,805
Expenses	47,087	3,635	44,198	200,081		1,975,347	1,990,844
Income over (under) expenses	(122)	(680)	26,586	48,153	180,965	1,829,657	1,191,961
Transfers between funds						-	
Change in Net Assets	(122)	(680)	26,586	48,153	180,965	1,829,657	1,191,961
Beginning balance	32,162	4,055	65,444	21,398	998,871	3,561,076	2,369,115
Ending balance	\$ 32,040	\$ 3,375	\$ 92,030	\$ 69,551	\$ 1,179,836	\$ 5,390,733	\$ 3,561,076

Activity Funds are self-supporting and supporting. The General Fund provides facilities and staff, but these activities raise money to support all other costs. Any unused funds are carried over to the next year.	The Preschool charges tuition to cover its cost of personnel and supplies.	The Endowment principal cannot be spent. Income is available for restricted purposes.
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**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KIRKWOOD
SUPPORT AND RESERVE FUNDS EXPENDITURES
YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2025**

Fund	Amount Authorized	Spent in Prior Year	Spent in Current Year	Total against Authorization	Left to Spend/ (Overspent)
Maintenance Support fund					
Plaster repair and painting	\$ 2,733	\$ 1,732	\$ 1,732	\$ 1,732	\$ 1,001
Additional Microphone for Chapel	3,296	3,381	3,381		(85)
Carpet in Gathering Space	21,186	21,406	21,406		(220)
Office Remodel	140,000	124,609	124,609		15,391
Overhang Roof Repairs	1,035	1,035	1,035		-
Total Maintenance Support Fund	\$ 168,250	\$ -	\$ 152,163	\$ 152,163	\$ 16,086
Ministry Support					
Speaker and Microphone for Arise	\$ 5,755	\$ 5,473	\$ 5,473	\$ 5,473	\$ 282
Music Support fund					
Piano upgrades	\$ 78,097	\$ 68,508	\$ 18,290	\$ 86,798	\$ (8,701)
Jazz on the Lawn and Kirkin' of the Tartan Concert	700	700	700	700	-
Handbell	900	900	900	900	-
Total Music Support Fund	\$ 79,697	\$ 68,508	\$ 19,890	\$ 88,398	\$ (8,701)
Reserve Funds					
Straub Scholarships	Per policy		\$ 2,100	\$ 2,100	
Courtyard Interment Engraving	Per policy		\$ 2,475	\$ 2,475	

**FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF KIRKWOOD
COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND SPECIAL OFFERING DISBURSEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2025**

Community Outreach

Rise Against Hunger	\$ 4,500	Community Outreach payments are funded by the general offerings to the Church and are determined by our Community Outreach Committee.
Kirkcare	4,500	
United Way Tornado disaster relief	3,000	
Presbyterian Children and Family Services	2,700	
Marion Medical Mission	2,500	
HomeFirst	2,000	
St. Andrew's Services	2,000	
Preschool Scholarship	1,700	
Kirkwood YMCA Club 44	1,500	
Bridge Bread	1,500	
Room at the Inn	1,500	
Welcome Neighbor STL	1,500	
Other hands on mission expenses	1,013	
Kwasha Kids	1,000	
Meachum Park Association	1,000	
St. Joseph Housing Initiative	1,000	
Other mission expenses	316	
Total Mission Outreach	\$ 33,229	

Hands on Mission Disbursements

Disaster Relief	10,760	Hands on Mission Disbursements are funded by gifts that are restricted for the purpose indicated.
Afghan Immigration Support	\$ 3,843	
Kirkcare	2,522	
Greentree Festival booth expenses	2,199	
Isaiah 58 (1/2 of Christmas Concert Proceeds)	1,954	
Little Pantry	1,394	
Pastors Discretionary	401	
Credit card fees for Alternative Market	314	
St Louis Mennonite Fellowship	100	
Giving Tree	100	
Room at the Inn	50	
Total Hands on Mission Disbursements	\$ 23,637	

Alternative Market Distributions:

Zee Bee Market	\$ 4,899	Alternative Market sale proceeds are disbursed to the market vendors based on their sales.
Kasha Kids	2,713	
Monarch	1,272	
Forai Inc.	666	
Christian Friends of New Americans	588	
Project Peanut Butter	492	
Sweet Celebrations	245	
Lydia's House	220	
St Louis Senior Dog Project	179	
Heifer Project	120	
Marion Medical Mission	60	
Total Alternative Market Distributions	\$ 11,454	

Special Offering Disbursements

One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ 1,585	Special Offerings collected are disbursed to the Presbytery for the indicated special collection.
Christmas Joy	1,856	
Peacemaking	518	
Pentecost	423	
Total Special Offering Disbursements	\$ 4,382	