Invitation and Response

We invite you to pray for COS and the critical **Stewarding God's Mysteries** initiatives to which we're called in 2025.

Sunday, November 17 is Commitment Sunday. During worship, you will be invited to bring forward your enclosed Faith Giving Intent Card, offering your gifts to God. You may also mail your Faith Giving Intent Card to the church office or fill it out online.

In weeks to come, we'll announce the current results of our **Stewarding God's Mysteries** commitments, including the number of Faith Giving Intents received and the faithful response of the congregation. We will celebrate the results together in January and invite you to celebrate with us.

We are so excited about the opportunities to meet the needs of the church and community in 2025!

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Stewarding God's Mysteries

– STEWARDSHIP APPEAL 2025 –

Think of us in this way: as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.
– 1 Corinthians 4:1-2

Introduction

The mission of Christ Our Shepherd is...connecting to Jesus' pathway of joy and life.

We are known as a congregation who **stewards God's mysteries** well. We share generously, feeding under-resourced school children locally, driving church camp development regionally, and emerging as one of the top giving congregations for the ministries of our synod and ELCA while also empowering change in Haiti globally.

Together, this last year, we have completed Phase 1 of our Sanctuary Renewal Project, creating a beautiful, modern, and inviting space ready to welcome new generations to experience God's wonder. Our superb musicians sound better than ever, enriching our reputation as a faith community of both contemporary and traditional worship excellence. We've built restrooms at our gorgeous 33-acre Palmetto Road Campus, opening new opportunities to connect with the community. Community groups highly value making their home in our facility while we also go into the community via Hops & Hymns at Line Creek, bread runs, Midwest Food Bank, and disaster relief projects.

We give thanks for how the members of our congregation make COS a place where folks after visiting 10 other area churches chose COS as their new faith home, citing our open arms, grace-centeredness, and focus on serving in the name of Jesus. COS disciples invest in faith development, via our dynamic youth program, care and share groups, and even creating podcasts on living the faith!

Needs

We give thanks for how the members of our congregation have recognized that while Jesus doesn't need our money, Jesus' mission does. So, facing well the need to deal with rising facility costs empowers us to keep driving life-giving ministries with our youth, seniors, community outreach and competitive compensation packages helping secure the vibrant leaders for rewarding impact. Sustaining ministry excellence is vital.

But what about changes? In the midst of a changing world, what doesn't change is our call to be "servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries"! In today's world of confusion, we get to show evidence of God's life-changing love, good news, and inclusion. We're confident we can face our challenges and do an even better job for Christ if we all pitch in together.

Ministry Initiatives

Stewarding God's Mysteries in 2025 includes the following three key ministry initiatives. $47,500 in new offerings next year will allow more of God's work through our hands.

WELCOMING NEW LEADERS

We're loving the dynamic worship leadership brought by the richly talented Larry Peterson. Likewise, we now need to secure a top-notch second pastor to spearhead initiatives with youth ministry and pastoral care. Offering a competitive compensation package incentivizing a dynamic leader to join COS is essential for vibrant ministry in the years ahead. To meet this need, we must grow our giving by $183 per week.

EXTENDING COMMUNITY

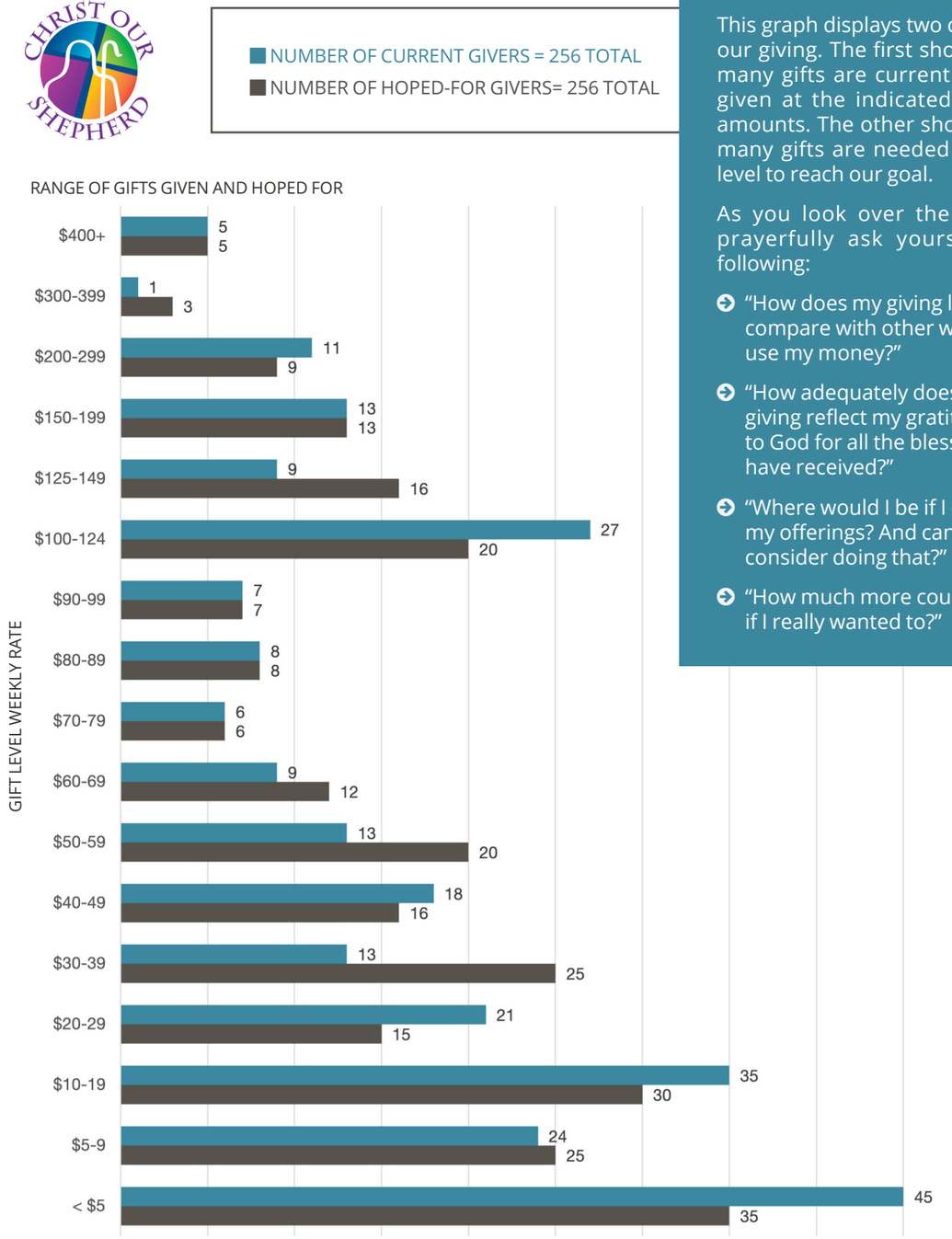
In a world where loneliness, partisanship and disconnection are on the rise, God blesses COS to be a refreshing cultivator of connections. This year, we launched new caring teams and small groups. We invested in new youth curriculum, retreats, and internships. We offered series fostering appreciation of the unity God's children can enjoy despite our differences. We seek to expand such community-connections so that regardless of age, political party, or family arrangement, everyone feels valued and no one walks alone. To meet this need, we must grow our giving by $228 per week.

BUILDING THE FUTURE

We celebrate our beautifully refreshed sanctuary and the new restrooms and related infrastructure at Palmetto Road, positioning us to grow in Jesus' command to welcome and serve our neighbors creatively as we enjoy such spaces ourselves! Our council seeks to also tackle deferred maintenance including our aging HVAC systems and roof to maintain and continue to refresh our facility for the future. Additional offerings will also empower increased youth summer internships, seminarian support, and equipping our younger generations to engage a changing world, where church participation is declining but the need for Jesus' hope is especially strong. To meet this need, we must grow our giving by $502 per week.

Stewarding God's Mysteries

CHRIST OUR SHEPHERD



This graph displays two charts of our giving. The first shows how many gifts are currently being given at the indicated weekly amounts. The other shows how many gifts are needed in each level to reach our goal.

As you look over the charts, prayerfully ask yourself the following:

- "How does my giving level compare with other ways I use my money?"
- "How adequately does my giving reflect my gratitude to God for all the blessings I have received?"
- "Where would I be if I doubled my offerings? And can I consider doing that?"
- "How much more could I give if I really wanted to?"