

MANCHESTER UMC

YEAR 2024

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

A YEAR IN REVIEW AT MANCHESTER UNITED  
METHODIST CHURCH





# A WORD FROM OUR LEAD PASTOR

Greetings Manchester UMC Family,

In 18th Century England, “the People Called Methodists,” began a movement with the conviction that one’s faith should change the way that people lived their life. John Wesley, Methodism’s founder, said we are to be a people who pursue a “holiness of heart and life.” By the end of the century, the movement had reached the French fur trading post called St. Louis. These Methodists met secretly in homes because Catholicism was the official religion of the French owned territory west of the Mississippi River. Following the Louisiana Purchase, John Ball, for who the town of Ballwin is named, provided the first permanent place of worship for area Methodists in 1826- a congregation that later became Manchester United Methodist Church.

A lot has changed at Manchester UMC over the past 200+ years. A lot has even changed in the last 12 months! But what I hope has not changed is a passion to pursue a “holiness of heart and life.” We still desire a faith that influences the way we live our lives. We still seek to make disciples of Jesus Christ who love God and love neighbor.

I have only served at Manchester UMC for six months, and yet I am blown away by your faithfulness, growth, and generosity. After a year of significant transition, I am inspired by the ways you have adapted to change while remaining rooted in a long tradition of being an hospitable and inclusive congregation. Worship attendance is steadily growing in each service and the modern worship service is running out of room. While 2024 was a difficult year financially, your generosity shined in December- a significant increase in giving from 2023. New formation groups and opportunities are forming for people of all ages and demographics. It is a thrilling time to be at Manchester UMC!

There is no question that the future of Manchester United Methodist Church is bright! As we begin preparing for an incredible bicentennial celebration in 2026, I am confident that we will always pursue a “holiness of heart and life.” Together, let’s love God and love neighbor. You always have, and with God’s grace, you always will.

It’s a joy to be your pastor,

REV. RON BEATON  
LEAD PASTOR

# A WORD FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR



Hello Manchester Family,

I am honored to serve as your Leadership Board Chair for 2025. I thank our clergy and church members for the confidence and trust you've placed in me. I do not take this responsibility lightly and pledge to lead in ways that honor the risen Christ. When our decisions are centered on Jesus, we can do great work within our church, our community, and beyond.

Over the past year and a half, we've experienced many changes, including clergy transitions and staff restructuring. While not always easy, I truly believe these changes were necessary and have positioned us for a strong future. With inspired leadership, we move toward our third century with momentum, ready for growth and renewal.

As United Methodists, we are called to live out our membership vows—supporting the church through our prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. While 2024 brought financial challenges, we ended the year with strong December giving, increasing in-person worship attendance, and a growing membership. In fact, this month, we will celebrate over 30 new members—an unprecedented milestone. Hallelujah!

As we journey through 2025, I invite each of us to embrace the words now displayed in our Narthex: Love God. Love Neighbor.

To Love God means deepening our relationship with Him—through prayer, reflection, devotion, and worship with our Manchester family. I encourage you to take a step further: find a way to get more deeply connected. Whether through a program, volunteer opportunity, or outreach, discover what speaks to you and take the leap!

To Love Neighbor means embracing all people, showing compassion, and dedicating ourselves to Christian service. John Wesley said it best:

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

May 2025 be a year of faith, service, and growth. Wishing you God's peace and blessings!

In Christ,

**CRAIG LOONEY**  
BOARD CHAIR

# LOVE God Neighbor

## DISCIPLESHIP: LOVE GOD. LOVE NEIGHBOR. LOVE.

As followers of Christ, we are called to live out our faith in ways that reflect His love and teachings. At Manchester United Methodist Church, we are guided by the Rule of Discipleship:

*"To witness Jesus Christ in the world and to follow His teachings through acts of Compassion, Justice, Worship, and Devotion under the guidance of the Holy Spirit."*

This guiding principle reminds us that our discipleship is both inward and outward, personal and public.

Through Works of Piety (Loving God), we seek to deepen our relationship with God. Publicly, we express this love in worship, gathering as a community to glorify God. Privately, we nurture it through acts of devotion, cultivating a personal connection with the Divine.

Through Works of Mercy (Loving Neighbor), we live out Christ's command to love others as we love ourselves. Publicly, we engage in acts of justice, advocating for change and addressing systemic challenges. Privately, we embody compassion, caring for the immediate needs of others with Christ-like love.

In this year's annual report, you will see how these principles have shaped our ministries, strengthened our community, and inspired our journey as disciples of Jesus Christ. Despite challenges, we have remained steadfast in our mission to Love God and Love Neighbor. This report celebrates our shared efforts and invites us to reflect on how we can continue living out our faith together.



# Worship

## Acts of Worship: Finding Faith and Family Through Worship Arts



For Esnath “Essie” Mugambiwa, worship is more than just a Sunday morning experience—it’s a way of life. As a participant in Modern Worship and the mother of two children, Zoey and Eli, who sing in Cantate, worship arts has become a deeply personal and meaningful part of her family’s journey of faith.



Acts of worship are the ways we grow in love of God together. Through baptism we are incorporated into the body of Christ. Worship is the heartbeat of that body. We worship through singing with one another, taking Holy Communion, giving of finances, reciting the creeds, and praying the Lord’s Prayer.

“Being part of the worship arts program is how we connect God’s word to our daily lives,” Essie shares. “Music has a way of reinforcing Scripture. The repetition of verses and choruses helps them stick with us long after the service ends.”

But beyond the spiritual connection, worship arts has also provided a way for Essie to stay close to her children. “Selfishly, it’s a way to stay connected with Zoey and Eli,” she admits with a smile. “We get to sing together not just in church but also in the car and at home. Worship isn’t just something we do—it’s part of who we are.”

For Essie, music is more than just a backdrop to worship; it’s how she engages with the message of the sermon and the presence of God. “Music fills my soul,” she explains. “There’s something powerful about expressing God’s word through song and dance. It allows me to connect with my faith in a way that words alone sometimes cannot. I feel truly blessed to be part of a ministry that understands and encourages this connection.”

The impact of worship arts extends beyond Sunday mornings. Essie often says, “All because of Modern Worship,” as a testament to the unexpected blessings that have come through her involvement in this ministry. “My children have made friendships that stretch beyond the walls of the church, and I’ve found a family I never expected,” she reflects. “The love and support we’ve received have shaped our lives in ways I never could have imagined. We wouldn’t be where we are today if we hadn’t said yes to serving in worship arts.”

Through song, dance, and community, Essie and her family have found more than just a place to worship—they’ve found a home. Worship, after all, is more than just an act; it is the heartbeat of faith, bringing people together in love, connection, and the presence of God.



# Devotion



Acts of devotion are personal ways we seek to love God more. They often take the form of spiritual disciplines like regular prayer, fasting, learning, reading devotions, studying the scriptures, spiritual development, and taking care of our bodies.



## Acts of Devotion: Finding God Through Serving Youth by Becky Ungles



Acts of devotion are the personal ways we seek to love God more deeply. They take shape in spiritual disciplines like prayer, fasting, scripture study, reading devotions, and even caring for our bodies. But sometimes, devotion is found in unexpected places—like a youth group game of 9 Square.

When I started working with the youth group I was merely fulfilling a need to have enough adults present to allow the activities to happen safely. I was concerned that I wasn't Biblically knowledgeable enough to serve in this role but was promised this would not be a problem as all curriculum was prepared and provided to me by Beth.

In the beginning, I filled a few spots on a Sunday morning or Wednesday evening but it wasn't until spending a week with the youth at Spirit Camp that I fully embraced the fact that this was the place for me to best use my spiritual gifts.

The youth at MUMC are the best. Yes, we learn a lot about following Jesus and the Bible during our time together but just as importantly the kids want to have those relationships with loving, trusted and fun adults. I love playing 9 square and all the other games with the kids. Some of them just want to tell me about their week or things going on with their friends. Sometimes, it's just making a bracelet or coloring together. The more time I spend with them the more they open up. While the majority of the time we are just laughing and having fun, there are times when they have confided in me with struggles and really needed to talk to an adult they trusted for advice.

I'm not sure there is a more fulfilling experience than knowing that I was there and was trusted when needed. These kiddos have so much more to deal with than I did growing up with today's social media. They really need the safe and incredibly fun space that the Youth Group provides them.

So while I may be learning some of the curriculum along side them, I am there for the fun and love and support and all the hugs they give me. They definitely brighten my day when I get to spend time with them.

# Worship and Devotion Impact

2608

PROFESSING MEMBERS

170 CHILDREN AND YOUTH PARTICIPANTS



541

ADULTS IN ALL CHRISTIAN FORMATION GROUPS  
AND OTHER SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES,  
+25%

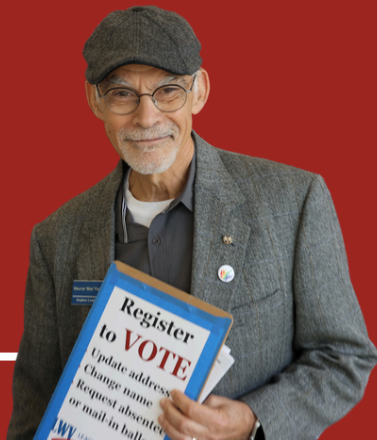


724

TOTAL number of persons  
participating in Christian  
formation groups, +4%

# Justice

Acts of Justice are the public way we love our neighbor. An example might be Jesus telling us to feed the hungry. But justice goes beyond feeding those who are hungry. Doing justice is asking why people are hungry and then to organize and act to address the causes of our neighbor's hunger



## Acts of Justice: Works of Mercy through Sneakers

by Moe Parisien

Being part of Mercy and Justice has always been who I am—as natural as waking up to greet the dawn of a new day. My journey deepened with Sneakers with Soul, a ministry born from a shared desire at MUMC to go beyond a ‘one-and-done’ event. Together with like-minded people who have a heart for mission, we sought to create a program with lasting impact—one that would serve our neighbors in need, particularly children experiencing poverty.

Scripture calls us to this work:

"...the poor, you will always have with you in the land. Therefore, Jesus commands you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and the poor, in your land.’” (Deuteronomy 15:7-11)

Mercy meets immediate needs—food, clothing, shelter—but justice challenges us to ask the harder question: Why do these needs exist in the first place? For me, the answer comes back to education. Without access to quality education, opportunities remain out of reach, and cycles of poverty persist. Justice is about breaking down the barriers that prevent people from thriving. Everyone deserves more than just getting by; they deserve the chance to succeed and flourish.

Sneakers with Soul is a mercy ministry addressing one symptom of poverty, but mercy must go hand in hand with justice. It’s like the Upstream Parable—if we only focus on pulling people out of the river, we’ll never ask: Who or what is pushing them in? Justice work means going upstream—identifying root causes, advocating for change, and ensuring sustainable solutions.

Mercy and justice are strongest when they work together. Mercy provides relief; justice creates transformation. As followers of Christ, we are called to love our neighbor by both meeting their needs and working for a world where all people—regardless of race, background, or economic status—have the opportunity for a better tomorrow. A tomorrow filled with hope, dignity, and lasting change.



# Compassion

Acts of compassion are personal works of mercy. They are what you do when a neighbor is in need. If someone is hungry, you share your food. When someone is lonely, you give them a visit. When someone's loved one dies, you go and comfort them. When someone is a stranger in the congregation or your home you extend hospitality.



## A Testimony of Compassion: Cliff Hackman's Story



At Manchester UMC, compassion isn't just a value—it's a way of life. For Cliff Hackman, this commitment to helping others is one of the most meaningful aspects of the church's mission. "Compassion is a key component of MUMC's teachings," he shares. "It encourages people to help those in need, offer comfort, and show kindness to others. MUMC provides us with the opportunity to do just that through its many ministries and outreach programs."

Beyond meeting needs, acts of compassion create deeper connections with others and nurture inner peace. "Compassion invites us to step into others' experiences with understanding and empathy," Cliff reflects. "In the context of faith, it has been transformative for me, giving me a profound sense of purpose. Simply caring for others fills my soul, offering fulfillment and peace that transcends my own personal needs or struggles."

Witnessing the compassion of others at MUMC has been a powerful source of inspiration. "Seeing people serve through ministry and outreach is a call to action," he explains. One example that has deeply impacted him is his involvement with Bridge Bread Bakery, a nonprofit social enterprise that helps people experiencing homelessness find stability and build a brighter future.

"Something as simple as picking up, selling, or promoting Bridge Bread products each weekend at church is incredibly rewarding," Cliff says. "Knowing that each loaf sold helps someone get off the streets and take steps toward a better life is both gratifying and humbling."

For Cliff, acts of compassion are more than just good deeds—they are an expression of faith, love, and community. Through service, he has found a deeper connection to God, his church, and the people who need it most.

# Justice and Compassion Impact

25,737

PEOPLE SERVED BY  
COMMUNITY  
MINISTRIES FOR  
OUTREACH, JUSTICE,  
AND MERCY



336

PEOPLE ENGAGED IN  
MISSION/COMMUNITY MINISTRIES



\$165,896

Total Direct Giving  
increase over LY

33%

# FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

## BY MARY PETTIT

In a year marked by uncertainty and change, we did not meet our financial goals. However, there are clear signs of hope and renewal on the horizon. This year, we celebrated one of the strongest Christmas Eve services in both giving and attendance since before COVID, a testament to the generosity and commitment of our congregation.

As we reflect on this progress, we also look ahead with anticipation. Your continued support in 2025 is vital to the life of our church.

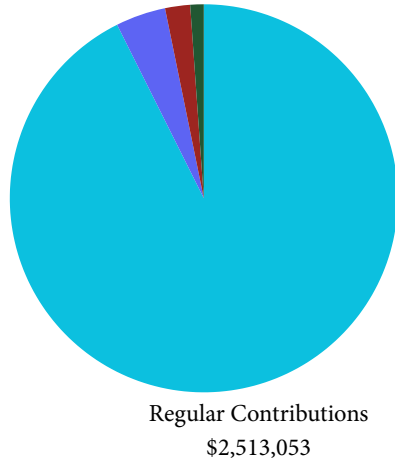
It is through your giving hearts that we are able to make all of our discipleship efforts possible. Every gift sustains our ministries and helps us fulfill our mission to Love God and Love Neighbor in meaningful and transformative ways.

Thank you for being a part of this journey. Together, we are building a stronger foundation for the future.



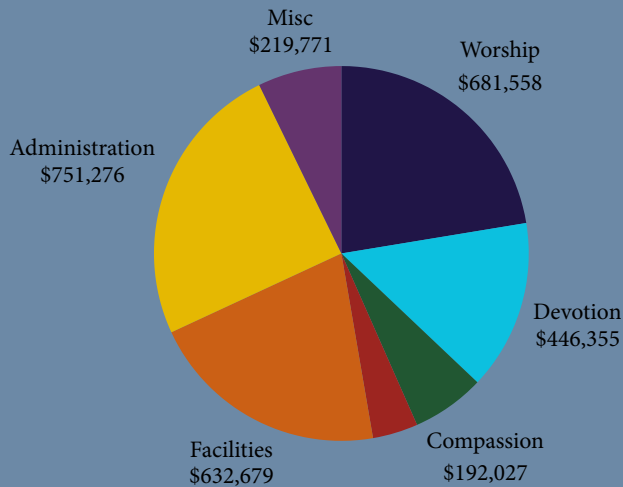
## Revenue \$2,713,192

Designated Giving and Grants  
\$113,117



- Regular Contributions= \$2,513,053=92.6%
- Designated Giving and Grants= \$113,117=4.2%
- Fees and Rent= \$56,562= 2.1%
- Interest Income= \$30,459=1.1%

## Overall Expenses \$3,042,736



- Worship = \$681,558 = 22.4%
- Devotion = \$446,355 = 14.7%
- Justice = \$119,070 = 3.9%
- Compassion = \$192,027 = 6.3%
- Administration = \$751,276 = 24.7%
- Facilities = \$632,679 = 20.8%
- Misc = \$219,771 = 7.2%

Revenue = \$2,713,192

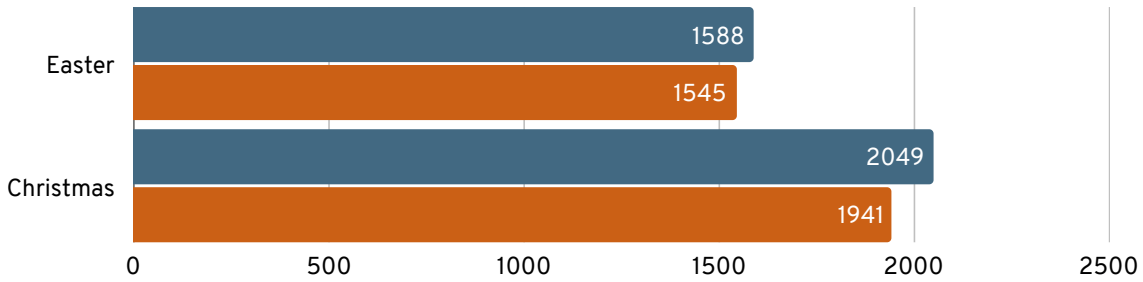
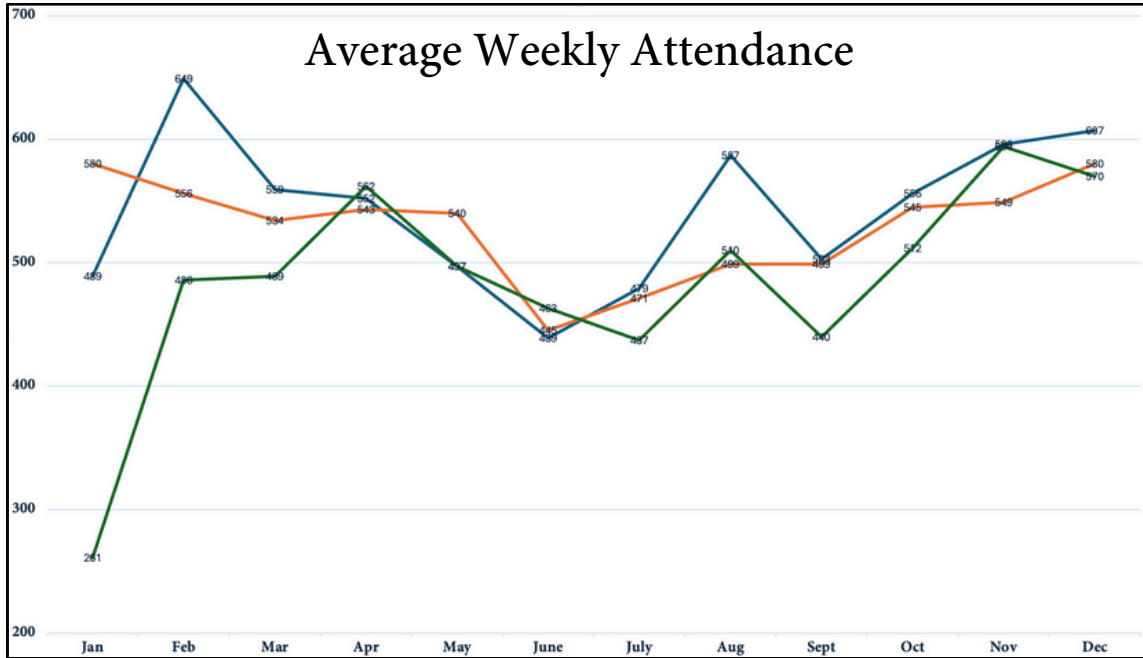
Expenses = \$3,042,736

Total = (\$329,544)

## Expense Subtotals

<b>Worship</b>	
Saturday	\$ 93,452.00
Modern	\$ 194,054.00
Traditional	\$ 342,858.00
Kids and Youth	\$ 51,195.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 681,559.00</b>
<b>Devotion</b>	
Children's Ministry	\$ 166,076.00
Youth Ministry	\$ 177,218.00
Young Adult Ministry	\$ 2,331.00
Adult Faith Formation	\$ 102,198.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 447,823.00</b>
<b>Justice</b>	
Personnel	\$ 54,056.00
Apportionments	\$ 54,681.00
Programming & Supplies	\$ 10,332.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 119,069.00</b>
<b>Compassion</b>	
Personnel	\$ 112,238.00
Apportionments	\$ 54,681.00
Programming & Supplies	\$ 25,108.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 192,027.00</b>
<b>Administrative</b>	
Personnel	\$ 537,916.00
Apportionments	\$ 72,908.00
Marketing & Communications	\$ 45,831.00
Other Ministry Support	\$ 94,621.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 751,276.00</b>
<b>Facilities</b>	
Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 239,121.00
Utilities	\$ 178,477.00
Insurance	\$ 146,986.00
Other	\$ 68,096.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 632,680.00</b>

# ATTENDANCE

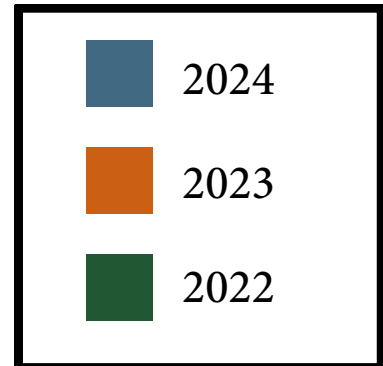


## AVERAGE WEEKEND WORSHIP ATTENDANCE

2024- 574, + 8%

2023- 531

2022- 485



# ENDOWMENT REPORT

## BY RICHARD LUZE

In 1991, MUMC received a modest gift from a donor who then asked that it be used to create a permanent endowment fund at the church. Each year the church was to make disbursements from the earnings of the endowment to support church priorities. Historically, those annual disbursement rates have been between 3.5%--5.0%.

Since that first gift, nearly \$2,500,000 has been added to the MUMC endowment by current and former members. During that same 33-year period over \$1,000,000 has been disbursed from the earnings of the endowment to support various ministries of the church.

In 2024, the total value of MUMC's endowment grew to over \$3,000,000, and nearly \$100,000 was disbursed to help underwrite the cost of maintaining the church's properties and supporting its many ministries. Currently, the Endowment Committee is exploring ways to dramatically grow the endowment to ensure that MUMC will remain in a strong financial position to, "Make a difference for Christ in church and community" for generations to come. The congregation will be learning more about these plans in the coming months.



### Endowment Funds Since 1991

**Total Endowment Funds Received= \$2,506,744**

**Total Ministry Support= \$1,127,890**

**Total End Balance Dec. 2024 = \$3,135,922**

# 2025 and Beyond



## 2025 Board Goals

- Vision
- Strengthen Areas of Discipleship
  - Worship
  - Devotion
  - Justice
  - Compassion
- Strengthen Financial Health





## THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS



To our incredible donors and volunteers,

Thank you for the countless ways you make Manchester United Methodist Church a place where God's love shines brightly. Your generosity, dedication, and tireless efforts are the foundation of everything we do.



Because of you, our ministries thrive, our community grows, and our mission to Love God and Love Neighbor is lived out every day. From your financial gifts that sustain our programs to the hours you dedicate to serving others, you are an integral part of this church family.



We are deeply grateful for the ways you embody Christ's teachings through your compassion, devotion, and unwavering commitment. Together, we are building a church where lives are transformed and God's love is shared with the world.

# Ways to Get Involved



## LEARN MORE ABOUT DISCIPLESHIP

[manchesterumc.org/discipleship/](http://manchesterumc.org/discipleship/)



## SIGN UP FOR MISSIONS AND MINISTRIES

We have many ministries that could use your help. Please sign up, and a ministry leader will contact you.

[manchesterumc.org/missions/](http://manchesterumc.org/missions/)



## CONNECT WITH A CONNECT COACH

Not sure where to start? Meet with a Connect Coach who can help you navigate Manchester UMC.

<https://manchesterumc.org/meet-a-connection-coach/>



## SIGN UP FOR ENEWS

Stay in the know about volunteer opportunities, events, classes, etc.

[manchesterumc.org/news/](http://manchesterumc.org/news/)



## DONATE

The best way to continue our ministry is to donate to the General Fund.

<https://onrealm.org/ManchesterUMC/-/form/give/now>