



October 2025 ministry update

Dear people of God at Peace,

Thanks for joining us in gospel ministry this year! I am grateful for many things and proud of the work we've done. Even more, I'm glad for the work God has done through us and proud of what he accomplished.

We have now gone through almost ten months of 2025 and want to work with you as we look to 2026.

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Our Mission

"We bring people the gospel of Jesus!"

This week more than 100 people were here and heard us say, "Jesus said, I feel all of the terrors, all of the troubles, all of the trials of their life and I'm going to carry it, and then I'm going to walk out of the tomb so that I can treasure them forever."

A week before I sat by a fire and said, "What do you think about Jesus? I'm not very religious. Yeah, but what do you think about Jesus? I don't know. I think he changed reality for you and me."

A few days ago a woman stood in front of a crowd and said as plain as day, "I want you to believe in the salvation won by Jesus Christ on the cross for all."

Friends, this is what we are here to do. This is what we are doing. Bringing people the gospel.

Our Vision

What do we want to see by bringing people the gospel? If we succeed, what will happen?

Many things.

The salvation of souls.

Even more, I would suggest we want to see the people of God in and from Otsego - Plainwell for time and eternity.

I think this is one thing we need to work to see more clearly.

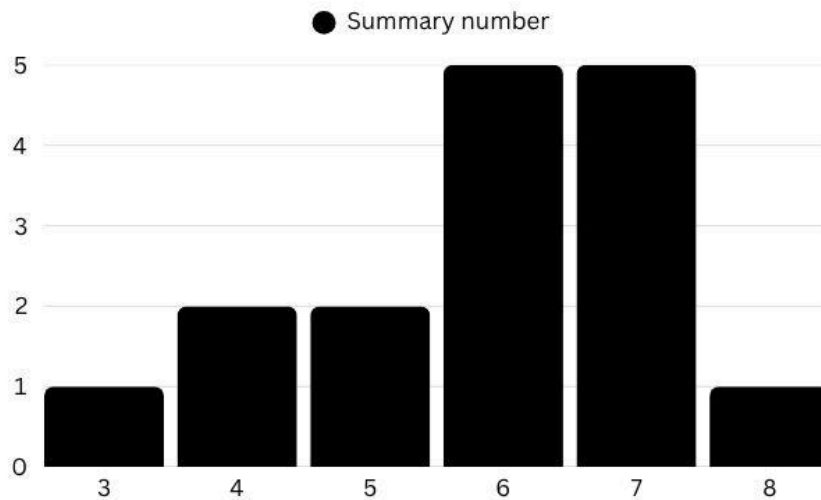
Our Ministry

Public services	Discipleship	Evangelism and Outreach
Services (including outdoor) Baptisms Confirmations Professions of faith Funerals	K-5 class Catechism Wednesday study 2025 Prayer initiative 2025 Thanksgiving initiative Christian Theology Ladies Guild Senior luncheon	Movie nights Evangelism workshops Easter services and Easter meal baskets Friendship Carnival Christian Neighbors Trail for Treaters Hometown Christmas Christmas Eve Kauhale and LifeCare Center Game nights

1. Discuss with your neighbor: How are things going? Come up with a number that summarizes how well our mission and ministry is going.

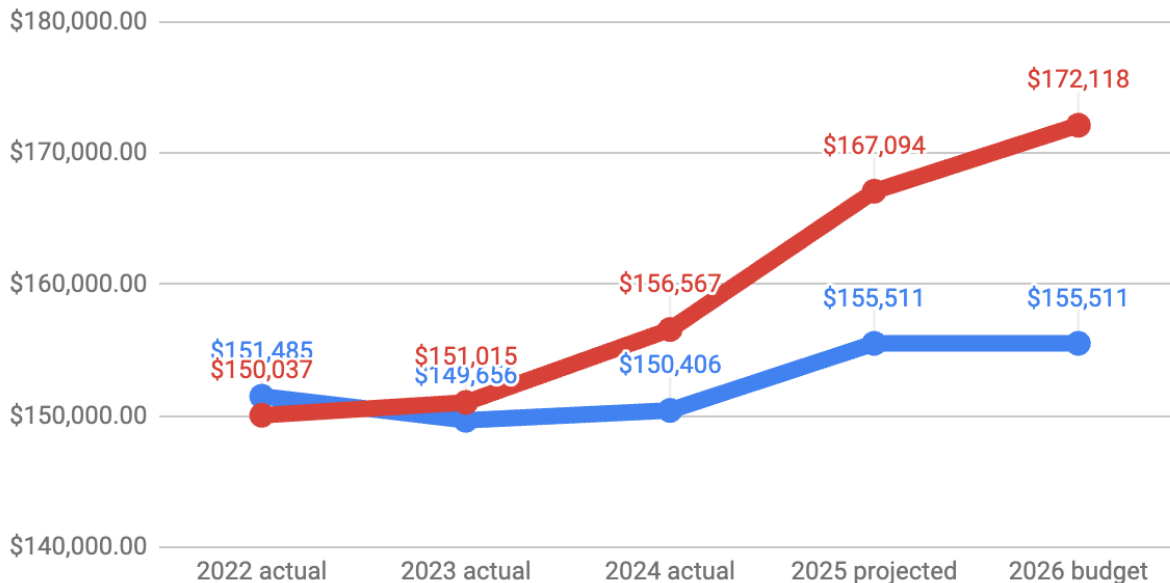
Add it to question #1 on the answer page.

How are things going? Come up with a number that summarizes how well our mission and ministry is going.



What does that cost? Finances in 2024 and 2025

Income and expenses



We use all the gifts of God's people as well as we can and to maximize the amount of ministry we can get done. We're really thankful that giving has remained stable and even grown significantly in 2025 (praise God!) through all the turbulence of the last decade so that we can provide good, consistent ministry to the people of Otsego - Plainwell.

As you can see from the list above, we do a lot of ministry with a minimal amount of money. We've worked hard to keep ministry costs down and have made cuts as necessary. Even still, ministry has become more expensive in recent years. We spend almost \$100,000 on staff and benefits, we spend about \$53,000 on the facility and administration, and the last \$19,000 on ministry activities.

We're concerned about the growing divergence between our income and expenses. The last two years (2023, 2024) have both seen greater expenses than income. 2025 projects to be more of the same, and 2026 again.

Unrestricted funds

We have some assets available to cover these shortages. We call them "unrestricted funds". Unrestricted funds refers to money we have that has not been given for a particular purpose and can be spent on any expenses. How long these funds last depends entirely on the size of the overspending. We are starting to draw down

these funds (called unrestricted funds). We still project that we will run out in 2026. These funds can be spent on regular ministry expenses. The unrestricted fund balance has changed as follows:

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	10/25	12/20 25
Unrestricted assets at end of year	\$64K	\$66K	\$41K	\$41K	\$42K	\$36.5K	\$38.4	\$____

2. Discuss with your neighbor: How would you handle a growing gap between income and expenses?

Write down at least one answer on the answer page.

How would you handle a growing gap between income and expenses?

Give more

Fundraisers

Building rental

Increase outreach

Consult with other congregations

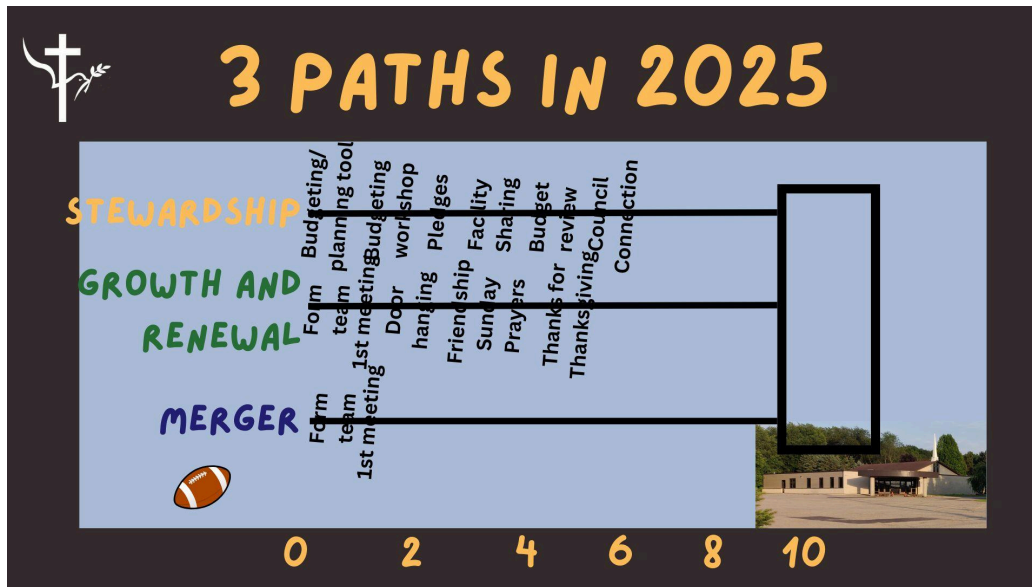
Open door to Turning Point

More active members

Bring in more revenue

Minimize utility use

What are we doing about that? Ministry progress in 2025



We want to do good ministry that not only brings people the gospel but then sees that gospel build the people of God in Otsego-Plainwell.

To do better ministry and share the gospel with more people (as well as work on our difficult situation), we tried to implement a three path approach in 2025.

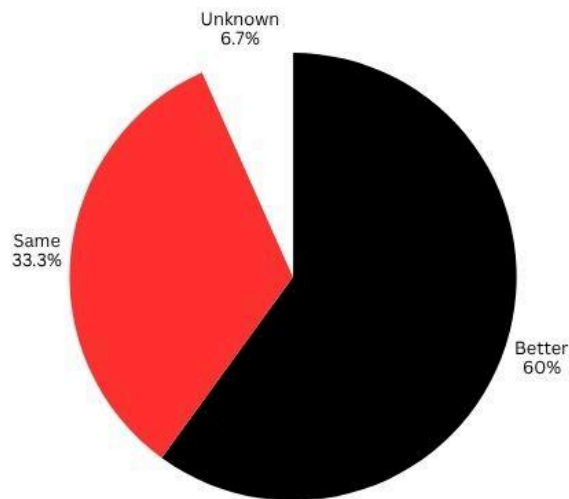
- The Council has developed our personal and corporate stewardship.
- The Growth and Renewal Team has led us in activities to support the spiritual renewal of the congregation.
- The Merger Investigation Team reviewed possible merger options.

3. Discuss with your neighbor: Based on what you've seen this year, how do you think we've done to work on our ministry? Did it get better? Worse? What are doing well?

Share one answer (either better or worse) on the answer page.

Based on what you've seen this year, how do you think we've done to work on our ministry? Did it get better?

Worse?



What's next? 2026 ministry

In order to prepare for 2026 ministry, we spent a number of months reviewing our ministry. We shared a detailed survey for us all to fill out. After discussion and analysis, here are the three directions we'd suggest Peace pursues:

1. (vision - I thought about this later. Add?)
2. Growth and renewal - we should refocus on the spiritual growth and renewal of the mission zeal of the congregation.

3. Stewardship - both personal and corporate

4. Cooperation - we suggest we look to cooperate with local congregations and multiply our strengths, get help with our weaknesses

We've got a lot of opportunity in front of us. Based on what we know, fewer than 1,000 people in Otsego - Plainwell are regularly part of a Christian congregation. There are no Christian schools. We could go on. Homes everywhere need to be filled with the gospel.

Let's do it!

4. Discuss with your neighbor: Which do you like the most? What would you like to work on in 2026?

Share one answer on the answer page.

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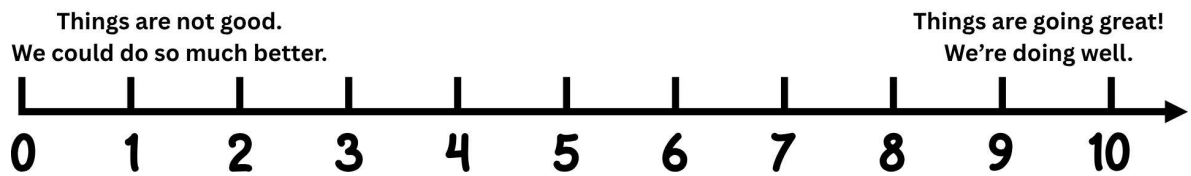
Sincerely

The council of Peace Lutheran Church

Josh Gower, Terry Brower, Michael Grimm, and Pastor Nathaniel Timmermann

My answers

1. Discuss with your neighbor: How are things going? Come up with a number that summarizes how well our mission and ministry is going.



2. Discuss with your neighbor: How would you handle a growing gap between income and expenses?

Write down at least one answer.

3. Discuss with your neighbor: Based on what you've seen this year, how do you think we've done to work on our ministry? Did it get better? Worse? Share one answer (either better or worse) below.

4. Discuss with your neighbor: Which do you like the most? What would you like to work on in 2026? Share one answer below.