



ST LUKE'S  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ENDOWMENT FUNDS

2024 Impact Report

**INVESTING  
IN THE FUTURE**

## INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Dear St. Luke's Family,

As we reflect on the past year, I am filled with deep gratitude for the many ways you continue to live out your faith through generosity, vision and commitment to the future of St. Luke's.

Our endowment is more than a financial resource. It is a testament to the legacy of those who came before us and a gift to those who will come after. In 2024, we witnessed remarkable expressions of faith through bequests, new members of the Michael Johnson Society and purposeful contributions that allowed us to expand ministry beyond our operating budget.

Because of you, we installed solar panels to steward our 2024 and More vision to creation care, provided healing counseling sessions to those in need, invested in sacred music that lifts our spirits in worship, and strengthened our ability to respond to mission opportunities locally and globally. Each gift, whether large or small, has lasting impact — and together, they are helping us build a strong and vital church able to serve future generations.

**REV. DR. JENNIFER STILES WILLIAMS**  
*Lead Pastor, St. Luke's United Methodist Church*



As you read through this report, I invite you to celebrate what we have accomplished and imagine what is still possible. I also encourage you to prayerfully consider how you might join in this legacy — through a gift today, a planned bequest or by becoming part of the Michael Johnson Society. Your generosity ensures that the mission and ministries of St. Luke's will continue to shine Christ's light far into the future.

With deep appreciation and hope,

## HIGHLIGHTS

**\$208,069**

Total distributed from the funds since 2017

**\$21,040**

Total dispersed in 2024 to support ministry

**\$429,503**

Increase in the value of the funds in 2024

**\$2.27 million**

Total value of the funds

# ST LUKE'S

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## 2024 IMPACT REPORT

BUILDING FAITH AND COMMUNITY TOGETHER

MUSIC CREATES BELONGING

EMPOWERED TO SERVE

OUR FUNDS: MINISTRY FOR GENERATIONS

HONORING LEGACY, INSPIRING THE FUTURE

FINANCIALS

THE GIFT OF GIVING

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*The St. Luke's praise team leads worship during a Sunday morning service. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)*

*Cover photo: Children and leaders perform during the annual summer Vacation Bible School at St. Luke's. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)*

## BUILDING FAITH AND COMMUNITY TOGETHER

When Hurricane Ike destroyed the Methodist church in the small town of Melones, Cuba, in 2008, all that remained was a concrete slab under a thatched roof. Still, worship continued.

Sixteen years later, that slab has become the foundation of something much greater. Thanks to generous gifts from St. Luke's partners through the Missions Endowment Fund, a new sanctuary now stands in its place — safe, joyful and full of hope.

The journey began in 2010 through the Florida Conference's Methodists United in Prayer initiative, which connected St. Luke's with Melones Methodist Church. The first project was a parsonage to provide safe housing for the pastor, laying the groundwork for a lasting partnership.

In 2024, the dream of a new church became a reality. The sanctuary seats 75 — double the original capacity — and serves not only as a place of worship but also as a certified hurricane shelter.

During a recent visit, the St. Luke's mission team joined worship and shared a meal with the congregation. The Rev.

Ramón Otamendi Castillo expressed his gratitude. "Many have come to know God's love through this church," he said. "We are growing together through prayer and study."

A local leader echoed that sentiment. "We thank God for the new church, which also serves the community in times of need," Norlinda Leyva Osorio said. "We're grateful for St. Luke's love and unconditional support. We are praying for you."

Support from St. Lukers also helped purchase land for a community garden and build a small space for Sunday classes, expanding ministry to children and families.

This is more than construction — it's transformation. Through shared mission, faith and generosity, Melones and St. Luke's are building something lasting.

And there's still more to come. Continued support for the Missions Endowment Fund will help this vibrant ministry grow and reach even more people with God's love.

— By Diana Mendez



*The Rev. Ramón Otamendi Castillo stands with the Melones Methodist Church congregation in front of their new sanctuary, made possible through the support of St. Luke's Missions Endowment Fund. (St. Luke's photo)*



*St. Luke's Global Missions team visits a mountain overlooking Holguín during their 2024 trip to reconnect with Melones Methodist Church and celebrate the opening of its new sanctuary. (St. Luke's photo)*

*"We thank God for the new church, which also serves the community in times of need. We're grateful for St. Luke's love and unconditional support."*

— Norlinda Leyva Osorio  
Melones Church leader

*The new Melones Methodist Church sanctuary in Cuba is now a place of worship, hope and community resilience. (St. Luke's photo)*



## TRADITIONAL CHOIR & ORCHESTRA FUND

### MUSIC CREATES BELONGING

When Timothy Lewis stepped onto the stage as one of the performers for the HymnSong concert at St. Luke's, he didn't realize the journey he was beginning.

Like so many others, he came for the music but left with something deeper: purpose, joy and a renewed calling. Today, he sings in the sanctuary choir, pouring his heart into songs that move and inspire others.

"(HymnSong) sparked a desire for me to continue to share my gift and find an outlet that allows me to spread the good news and love of Christ," Lewis said. "I truly feel I am in the right place at the right time."

A partnership between St. Luke's and Encore! Performing Arts, HymnSong has become a treasured tradition made possible through generous gifts to the Traditional Choir and Orchestra Endowment Fund. Since its inception, the musical event has offered 2,000

guests the opportunity to experience new and familiar interpretations of beloved hymns.

But it's not just a concert. It's a spiritual experience that welcomes newcomers and offers them a place to belong. Of the 152 musicians who have participated to date, 108 were guests. Many now call St. Luke's their spiritual home.

Sandy Kupetz is one of them. "Now I get to do this every week with my new choir friends," she said. "An added bonus is getting to experience this with my daughter, who also joined the choir after an amazing HymnSong experience."

Music is more than melody at St. Luke's — it's ministry. Continued giving to the Traditional Choir and Orchestra Endowment Fund preserves this musical legacy and helps deepen people's faith through the power of song.

— By Susan Kocarek

[www.st.lukes.org](http://www.st.lukes.org)



Bradley Roberts, senior director of Traditional Music at St. Luke's, conducts during HymnSong — a celebration of hymns presented in collaboration with Encore! Performing Arts. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)



Soloists perform during the HymnSong concert, honoring the beauty and legacy of hymns. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)

*"(HymnSong) sparked a desire for me to continue to share my gift and find an outlet that allows me to spread the good news and love of Christ."*

— Timothy Lewis  
HymnSong participant



The choir and musicians come together at St. Luke's for HymnSong, a celebration of music, faith and community. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)

## MCKEEFERY SEMINARY SCHOLARSHIP FUND

### EMPOWERED TO SERVE

When John Shughart felt called to attend Duke Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina, he knew the journey would come with financial challenges. While exploring options within the Florida Conference, he discovered the McKeefery Seminary Scholarship Fund at St. Luke's and applied with hope.

"The scholarship allowed me to go into seminary worrying less about finances and focusing more on what God had called me to do," he said.

Thanks to the McKeefery Scholarship — and others across the conference — Shughart graduated from Duke in May 2023 without taking on student loans. That freedom gave him the ability to fully engage in seminary life and ministry preparation.

"It freed me up to participate fully at Duke," he said. "And it meant I could serve without the burden of debt hanging over my head."

During and after seminary, Shughart served at Glendale Heights UMC in Durham, Lena Vista UMC in Auburndale and Community of Faith UMC in Davenport. Now, he and his wife, Emily, also a Florida Conference elder, are serving together at Asbury UMC in Maitland.

"To the donors, I say, 'thank you,'" he added. "Your generosity makes it possible for students like me to follow our call without fear. You are equipping leaders for the future of the church."

Shughart encourages others to consider giving to the scholarship fund.

"This is one of the hardest times in history to commit to seminary," he said. "But also one of the most important. We need strong, courageous clergy — and scholarships like McKeefery's make that possible."

— By Diana Mendez

[www.st.lukes.org](http://www.st.lukes.org)



*The Rev. John Shughart celebrates his graduation from Duke Divinity School in Durham, North Carolina, in May 2023. (Photo courtesy of John Shughart)*



*The Rev. John Shughart is ordained a provisional elder of the Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church in June 2023. (Florida Conference photo)*

*"To the donors, I say, 'thank you.' ... Your generosity makes it possible for students like me to follow our call without fear."*

— Rev. John Shughart  
McKeefery Scholarship Fund  
recipient

*The Revs. John and Emily Shughart celebrate Easter at Community of Faith United Methodist Church in Davenport. (Photo courtesy of John Shughart)*



## OUR FUNDS

### MINISTRY FOR GENERATIONS

The nine permanent endowment funds established at St. Luke's ensure the congregation's values and legacies live on for generations to come. They provide resources for initiatives that don't receive budgeted funds, enabling the church to offer new and innovative ministries well into the future.

### ARTS FUND

Dedicated to funding visual and performing arts across all worship styles and ministries to support both spiritual enrichment and creative expression.

### \$1.25 million & \$50,000

Fund goal & annual amount available for ministry when the goal is met

### CAPITAL EXPENDITURES FUND

Provides resources for major building repairs, renovations and campus improvement, ensuring the church's physical spaces remain welcoming and functional.

### \$1.25 million & \$50,000

Fund goal & annual amount available for ministry when the goal is met

### \$14,240

Awarded in 2024 for the Annex Solar Project, a collaborative solar panel installation on the Annex/United

Women in Faith gift shop, made possible through a joint investment from the endowment, United Women in Faith and church trustees. The project reflects the church's commitment to care for God's creation and reduces long-term utility costs, allowing more resources to be available for ministry.

### \$98,539

Bequest to the fund from [Gary Dirlam](#)

### COMMUNITY COUNSELING CENTER FUND

Supports the mental and emotional health of the congregation and community by underwriting counseling services and mental health ministries.

### \$250,000 & \$10,000

Fund goal & annual amount available for ministry when the goal is met



After placing the ashes during the Ash Wednesday service, the Rev. Jad Demark offers a moment of prayer. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)



For more than 37 years, St. Luke's has partnered with the Coalition for the Homeless to prepare and serve monthly meals. (St. Luke's photo)

*"Do not forget to do good to others. And share with them what you have. These are the sacrifices that please God."*

— Hebrews 13:16 (ICB)



St. Luke's supports Zoe Empowers, a global program helping vulnerable children become self-reliant through holistic care and community. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)

## OUR FUNDS

### MINISTRY FOR GENERATIONS

#### CONGREGATIONAL CARE FUND

Funds care ministries, such as pastoral support, meal trains and visitation, ensuring ongoing compassion and sustainability.

#### \$1 million & \$40,000

Fund goal & annual amount available for ministry when the goal is met

#### \$10,000

Bequest to the fund from  
**L. Evans Hubbard**

#### GENERAL FUND

This flexible fund meets emerging needs and opportunities that support the church's overall mission and sustainability.

#### \$1 million & \$40,000

Fund goal & annual amount available for ministry when the goal is met

#### \$5,000

Bequest to the fund from  
**L. Evans Hubbard**



[www.st.lukes.org](http://www.st.lukes.org)



*The Rev. Jenn Stiles Williams places her hands on a confirmand in a moment of prayer and affirmation during Confirmation Sunday. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)*



*Participants of all ages engage in the Cost of Poverty Experience, gaining deeper understanding and empathy for those living in poverty. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)*

## OUR FUNDS

### MINISTRY FOR GENERATIONS

#### MCKEEFERY SEMINARY SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Honoring the legacy of Rev. Dr. William McKeefery, this fund supports individuals from the Florida Conference of The United Methodist Church who are pursuing seminary education and ordained ministry.

#### \$500,000 & \$20,000

Fund goal & annual amount available for ministry when the goal is met

**\$60,600**  
Awarded in scholarships to 46 students since the fund's inception in 2004

#### MISSIONS FUND

Supports local and global mission efforts, ensuring that St. Luke's can respond generously to needs beyond its walls through outreach, service and justice initiatives.

#### \$1.25 million & \$50,000

Fund goal & annual amount available for ministry when the goal is met

#### TRADITIONAL CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA FUND

Preserves and enhances the church's traditional worship arts by supporting musicians, instruments and performance needs.

#### \$1 million & \$40,000

Fund goal & annual amount available for ministry when the goal is met

#### \$6,800

Provided resources for musicians, music and instrumental support, enriching traditional services and upholding the church's long-standing commitment to excellence in worship



*St. Luke's partners with Sleep in Heavenly Peace to build and deliver beds for children in need. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)*



*St. Lukers and community members come together to experience "The Sound of Music," a production of St. Luke's Theatre Ministry. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)*

## MICHAEL JOHNSON SOCIETY

### HONORING LEGACY, INSPIRING THE FUTURE



The **Michael Johnson Society** was created to honor those whose extraordinary generosity strengthens the future of St. Luke's through lasting gifts to the endowment funds.

Named in memory of Michael Johnson — whose leadership and vision were foundational in organizing the endowment ministry and establishing its long-term strategic plan — the society recognizes individuals and families who, like Michael, believe in planting seeds for generations to come.

St. Lukers are invited to become part of this meaningful circle of legacy givers who sustain life-changing ministry, spiritual growth and community impact far into the future. Gifts of **\$10,000 or more** to one of the nine endowments honor faith and commitment to the church's mission and ensure its ministries will thrive for generations.



[www.st.lukes.org](http://www.st.lukes.org)

#### FOUNDING MEMBERS

##### \$100,000 and above

Michael and Libby Johnson  
Ruth McKeefery

##### \$50,000 and above

Estate of Gary Dirlam  
Merlin Olson

##### \$25,000 and above

Craig and Carol Bonestroo  
Harriet Coleman  
Mark Puig

##### \$10,000 and above

Glenn and Ginger Jackson Family  
Tom and Aruna Katta  
Joe Folger and Marilyn McDonald  
Bill and Nancy Yarger



*The Rev. Jad Denmark leads a class for adults as part of the church's commitment to spiritual formation and education for all ages. (St. Luke's photo)*

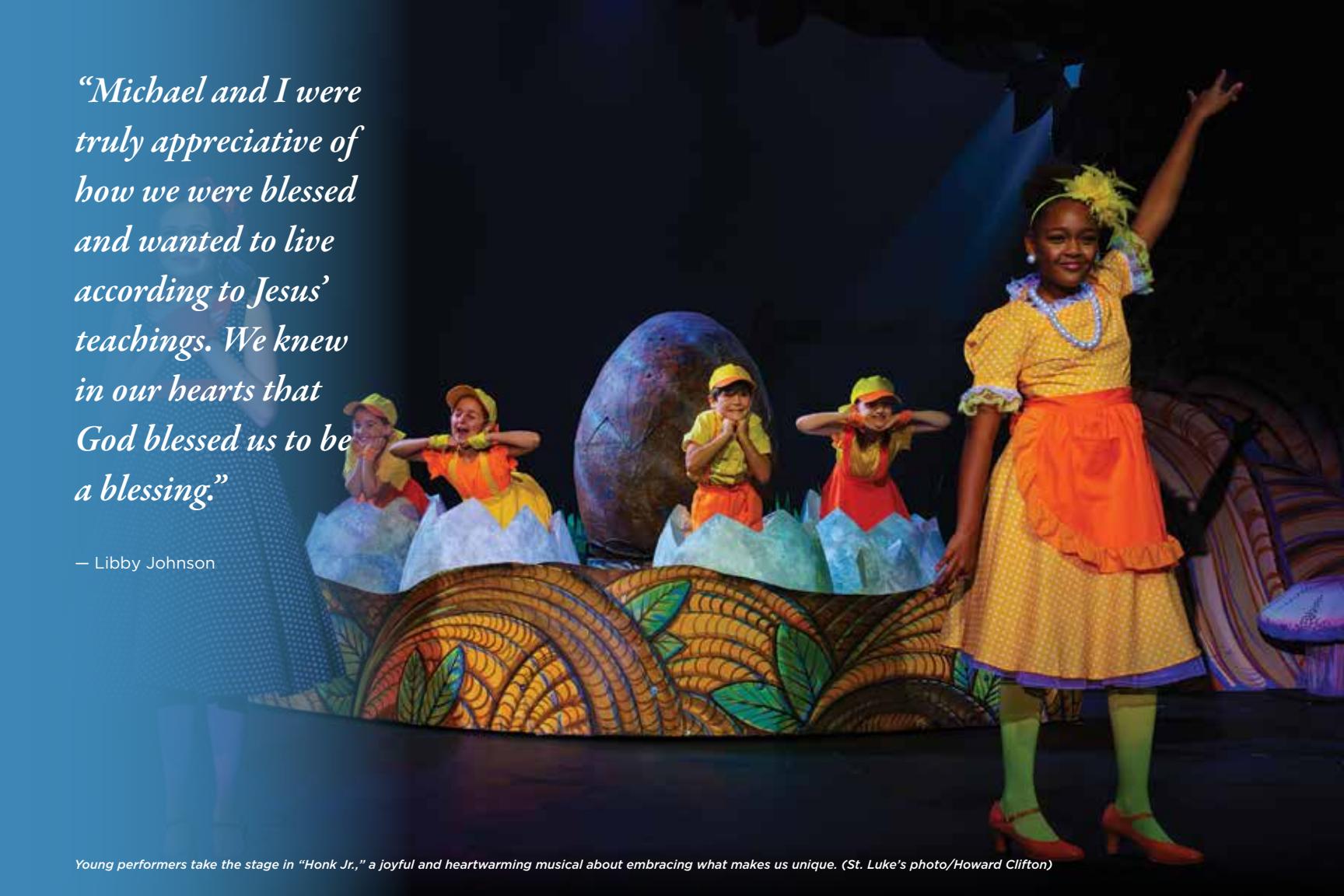


*Kids engage with joy and curiosity during morning time at St. Luke's Vacation Bible School. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)*

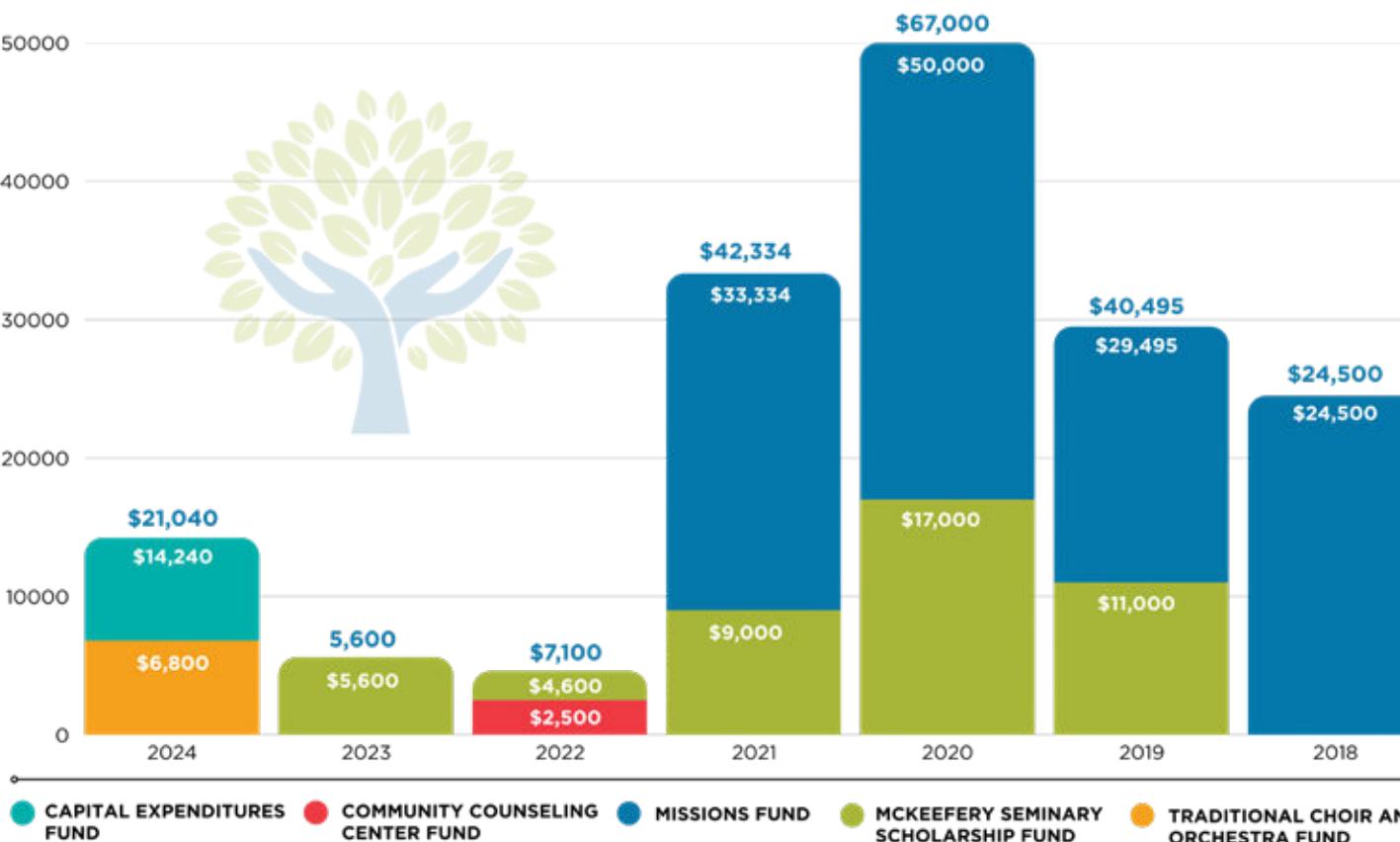
*“Michael and I were truly appreciative of how we were blessed and wanted to live according to Jesus’ teachings. We knew in our hearts that God blessed us to be a blessing.”*

— Libby Johnson

*Young performers take the stage in “Honk Jr.,” a joyful and heartwarming musical about embracing what makes us unique. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)*



## TOTAL DISTRIBUTIONS SINCE 2018



## YEAR-END FUND BALANCES &amp; GROWTH

FUND	GROWTH IN 2024	2024	2023	2022
ARTS	\$9,851	\$10,146	\$294	\$285
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	\$145,789	\$499,751	\$353,962	\$23,113
COMMUNITY COUNSELING CENTER	\$9,371	\$94,217	\$84,846	\$76,162
CONGREGATIONAL CARE	\$11,867	\$11,978	\$111	\$108
EDUCATION	\$10,564	\$10,675	\$111	\$108
GENERAL	\$22,425	\$43,690	\$21,265	\$14,343
MCKEEFER SEMINARY SCHOLARSHIP	\$37,429	\$432,828	\$395,399	\$356,316
MISSIONS	\$92,514	\$1,005,777	\$913,263	\$805,647
TRADITIONAL CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA	\$89,396	\$160,925	\$71,529	\$50,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$429,208</b>	<b>\$2,269,988</b>	<b>\$1,840,485</b>	<b>\$1,326,081</b>

## RESPONSIBLE AND ALIGNED INVESTING

All endowment gifts are carefully invested through the [Florida United Methodist Foundation](http://www.fumf.org) ([www.fumf.org](http://www.fumf.org)), a partner that specializes in managing church-related funds with financial prudence.

The foundation invests in a diversified portfolio that includes fixed income, equities and socially screened investments aligned with United Methodist principles. Its investment committee provides ongoing oversight to ensure long-term stability and sustainable growth.

St. Luke's endowments benefit from:

- **Pooled investment funds** to reduce risk and increase efficiency.
- **Quarterly performance reporting and benchmarking**.
- **Professional fund management** guided by ethical standards and fiduciary responsibility.

## WAYS TO GIVE

All gifts are welcome, and each is important. Examples of the types of gifts that can be given to ensure the expansion and continuation of St. Luke's mission and ministries include:

- Cash/checks
- Bequests of a fixed amount or percentage through a will
- Stocks and bonds
- Payable-on-death account (bank or brokerage account)
- Trusts
- Retirement plan
- Personal property
- Real estate
- Life insurance (all or part of a policy)
- IRA or retirement account designation (all or part)
- Gift annuities
- Life-income contract

- Memorial gifts made by you honoring others or memorials and tributes given in your honor by relatives or friends
- Contributions by you now so you receive tax benefits now

Anyone who would like to make a gift to one or more of St. Luke's endowment funds may do so online by using the QR code or visiting [www.st.lukes.org/endowment](http://www.st.lukes.org/endowment) or by mailing a check, with the specific endowment fund noted in the memo line, in the envelope provided.



Those who would like more information about ways to give or the endowments funds may contact Scooter Leonard, executive director of administration, at 407.876.4991, extension 223, or [scooter@st.lukes.org](mailto:scooter@st.lukes.org)

## ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Karen Brown  
**Tom Johnson, Chair**  
**Melanie King, Secretary**  
Janet Klosterboer  
**Scooter Leonard, Staff Liaison**  
Amy Lord  
**Richard McFayden, Vice Chair**  
Merlin Olson  
Tita Parham  
Steve Smith  
Debby Zutter



[www.st.lukes.org](http://www.st.lukes.org)

*"Just as you excel in everything — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us — see that you also excel in this grace of giving."*

— 2 Corinthians 8:7



Children gather with the Children's Ministry director during All-In Sunday, a monthly service where families worship together. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)



4851 S. Apopka-Vineland Road  
Orlando, FL 32819  
407.876.4991

### RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Follow us on:



A young St. Luker volunteers with Sleep in Heavenly Peace to build beds for children in need. (St. Luke's photo/Howard Clifton)