



# Annual Report

*January 25, 2026*

As seen from County Road 5, the original Oxlip Evangelical Free Church building (pictured on the right) was the joining of two smaller Swedish Mission churches from the turn of the 20th Century. In 1980, the new center for worship and fellowship was added. Another addition was added in 2013, which provided handicap access and extra space. Oxlip still consists of a group of hard-working, down-to-earth people who love the Lord and each other, and rely on their faith in God for the day-to-day celebrations and challenges of life.

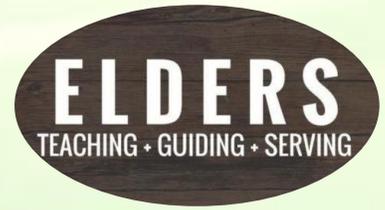
Oxlip Church is the country church with a congregation size that helps you feel welcome and "at home".



Our mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ who abide in Him, acclimate to the truth He gives, and advance together as His church. This is accomplished with knowledge of the Gospel and Biblical truth, which frees us from sin and bears lasting fruit for His kingdom. We are authentic believers abiding in Christ by the truth of His Word guiding our actions in fellowship together.

This Annual Report summarizes God's abundant blessings through the work of His people at Oxlip. This includes ministry updates, challenges, lessons learned, goals for 2026, and a summary of church finances through God's provision and the faithfulness of His people.

Lead Pastor, Joel Cook, and the Oxlip Board of Elders wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who call Oxlip their home. It continues to be our honor to serve God, lead His church, and shepherd His people. We continue to seek God's blessing and even greater ways that Oxlip can lead people to Christ and impact our community.



**Ministry Leader:** Dan DeBruyn, Board of Elders Chair

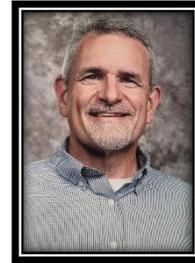
### Elder Board Ministry Overview

The role of the Board of Elders is to provide spiritual oversight, direction, and governance for our church, while focusing on our mission and vision with biblical integrity. The Board of Elders is responsible for guarding doctrine, shepherding the congregation, supporting the Lead Pastor, and making high-level policy decisions to ensure the church’s health.

### Leadership & Team



Pastor Joel Cook  
Board of Elders  
Lead Pastor,  
Ex-officio



Dan DeBruyn  
Board of Elders  
Elder, Chair



Brian Bolstad  
Board of Elders  
Elder, Vice-Chair



Clay Larson  
Board of Elders  
Elder, Secretary



Jim Aleckson  
Board of Elders  
Elder



Scott Lundeen  
Board of Elders  
Elder

### Challenges

- The Board of Elders took on a new format for shepherding across the church in an effort to further build relationships and strengthen prayer and support for our members. The ministry is a work-in-progress and we hope to continue refining it in 2026.
- Hiring a Youth Director and (new) Worship Director has proven to be more challenging than anticipated. We will continue to pray, advertise, network, and creatively seek out the candidates God has called to Oxlip.

### Lessons Learned

- Oxlip has an amazing congregation. Through challenges and many victories, we continue to seek the Lord and celebrate His blessings – including a faith-filled, Bible-believing church.



## Board of Elders Key Accomplishments (in 2025)

Year	Board of Elders Strategic Goal	2026 Annual Meeting Update
2025	Strategic Goal 2025-1: By March 2025, finalize a list of additional <u>policies</u> in need of creation or revision for completion by December 2025.	List completed in summer 2025. Numerous policies approved and posted on website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised Constitution and Bylaws</li> <li>• Shepherding Policy</li> <li>• Wedding Policy</li> <li>• Membership Policy</li> <li>• Life Groups Policy (Small Groups)</li> <li>• Gender Roles in the Church Policy</li> </ul>
	Strategic Goal 2025-2: By summer 2025, establish an organized, coordinated, and comprehensive plan for the implementation of <u>small groups</u> at Oxlip for implementation no later than December 2025.	Small Groups Policy was completed in December 2025. Referred to as Life Groups. Implementation delayed due to the business of the holiday season and leadership. Anticipate implementation in 2026.
	Strategic Goal 2025-3: By spring 2025, hire a new <u>Youth Director/Pastor</u>	Youth Director and Worship Director positions were posted several times on numerous strategic online platforms throughout 2025. One applicant was interviewed in the summer who chose to withdraw from consideration. Although leads have been followed, no additional applicants have been received. Many church worship and youth positions are open across Minnesota. The Board of Elders is thankful for various members who have continued to work with the youth in the interim. The positions are still posted and the Board of Elders is seeking guidance from the North Central District.

## Board of Elders Goals and Vision (2026)

Strategic Goal 2026-1: In an effort to reach more people in our community for Jesus Christ, while also building on the foundation for the future of Oxlip Church, the Board of Elders will prayerfully seek God's direction, and work with staff, church leadership, and the congregation to <u>establish a plan by June 2026 for the growth of Oxlip Church</u> . The plan will likely involve areas like community outreach, facilities updates, ministry growth, church branding/marketing, service modifications, and staffing.
Strategic Goal 2026-2: By September 2026, implement the newly approved <u>Life Groups Policy</u>
Strategic Goal 2026-3: By Summer 2026, hire a new <u>Youth Director and Worship Director</u> (can be one or two people). <i>This goal is continued from 2025.</i>
Strategic Goal 2026-4: By December 2026, review the <u>shepherding program</u> and consider modifications, if needed.
Strategic Goal 2026-5: By December 2026, update or create at least four <u>church policies</u> . <i>This goal is continued from 2025.</i>



**Ministry Leader:** Kristina Peterson, Children's Ministry Director

### Children's Ministry Overview

The Oxlip Children's Ministry teaches biblical truths at an age-appropriate level and seeks to create resilient disciples for Christ's kingdom. Children are loved at Oxlip as we cultivate godly relationships and model biblical values for them. *Luke 18:16*

### Leadership and Team (2025)

Christian Education Teachers: Deb Zierwick and Nadette Waligora

AWANA Volunteers: 28 (including, but no limited to, Directors Sandy Murray, John Ellsworth, and JoAnn Welcome (now retired))

Nursery Volunteers: Dawn Selin, Kari Larson, Amber Alm, Janet Bolstad, Kathy Anderson, Ellie Orr, Julie DeMars, Axel Orr, and Nancy Prins.

### Key Accomplishments (2025)

- Building relationships with 7 new AWANA families (parents and children).
- We made new connections in the community through both Vacation Bible School (VBS) and AWANA.
- Our AWANA Connect with Bill Hoppe had a record amount of attendees (21).
- We had a significant number of new volunteers for AWANA.
- During VBS, the kids raised around \$1,000 for LifeRice to send to Ukraine. Lonya Shapovolov, with the assistance of Anhelina, taught the kids each week about Ukraine (life, culture, current events...) and it was very impactful.
- The Sunday morning elementary class has been learning new instruments (tone chimes, other percussion...) and different ways to worship the Lord.



The name Awana is an acronym for "Approved Workmen Are Not Ashamed," which comes from the key verse: "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15, NIV). The goal of Awana is to "reach kids, equip leaders, and change the world" by making one disciple at a time.

### Challenges

Finding teaching volunteers for Sunday School

*Whenever I felt that we wouldn't have the right people to connect to a certain job within the church/ministry, God always provided what was needed. – Kristina Peterson*

### Goals & Vision (for 2026)

- Create a more robust Sunday morning program, which, in addition to teaching, includes solid routines around prayer and worship. This would include adding a 2-3 year old class during Christian Education (CE) hour.

- Create a consistent prayer routine for the ministry. Pray as a group before planning events and before the event itself (VBS, Sunday School, workdays, AWANA...). Pray for each child and family in our care.

### Strategic Needs

- Volunteers! We are in need of additional teachers during CE hour (2 in each age group, 6 total if we add the other age group) and a rotating schedule for Children’s Church.
- Children’s outdoor play space (e.g., gaga pit, playground, basketball hoop)

### Possible Initiatives

- Providing a Children’s Church program during the Sunday morning service (when the sermon begins). This is a growing expectation for families with young children, especially new families to the church.
- Community garden for kids. The K-5th grade group would benefit from time working outside with their hands with lessons developed around it.





**Worship Leader:** Carlotta Lund, Worship Director

### **Worship Ministry Overview**

The Worship Ministry presents thoughtfully planned worship services that support and enhance congregational worship, planned and coordinated by the Worship Director. The Worship Ministry includes planning worship services, recruiting, rehearsing, and communicating with the worship and tech teams, coordinating all sanctuary-related activities (e.g., decor, maintaining instruments, purchasing and updating technology), meeting weekly with church staff to collaborate, communicate, and ensure that worship services align with the overall vision and ministry of the church, ensuring updated music licenses, and setting up ProPresenter (lyrics, graphics, sermon notes).

### **Leadership & Team**

Worship Director: Carlotta Lund

Lead Sound Technician: Stephen Callen

Worship Team: Many talented and dedicated singers, musicians, and support technicians



### **Key Accomplishments (in 2025)**

- Consistently beautiful and meaningful services
- Well attended and impactful Good Friday, Resurrection Sunday, and Advent with Christmas Eve services.
- New microphone was purchased for Pastor Joel, along with a set of wireless handheld mics.
- New Bibles were donated to be used in the sanctuary
- A portable baptistry was gifted to the church - We are excited to christen it at our next baptism service this spring!

*“Many Sundays at least one person mentions that a particular song sung or Scripture passage read touched their hearts in a powerful way.” – Carlotta Lund*

### **Challenges**

We experience a shortage of tech team members, as well as musicians and singers.

Scheduling cohesive teams for each week is a challenge.

### **Lessons Learned**

Keep praying! God will provide, as we strive to serve Him with all that we are.

### **Goals & Vision (for 2026)**

- At least one additional sound tech trained to full confidence.
- Replace the projector and screen that we currently use for presentation.

- Continue to introduce new meaningful songs for our worship services.
- Create more flexible seating in the sanctuary to accommodate those in wheelchairs or other special needs.

**Strategic Needs & Requests**

- Several people from the congregation who will devote time and energy to train on the sound board and worship team and commit to being scheduled on a rotating basis.
- Finances for some updates needed in the sanctuary.

**(Possible) New Initiatives**

Hold events in the Fellowship Hall that include using the piano, such as hymn-sings and other programs.



*Ministry would not be possible if not for the faithfulness of God's people and the Lord working in people's hearts.*



# MISSIONS

**Ministry Leader:** Jim Aleckson

## Ministry Overview

The Missions Committee exists to encourage and support evangelism beyond our local congregation in fulfillment of the Great Commission. Our purpose is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, make disciples, and gather believers into local congregations, while addressing the spiritual, physical, emotional, and social needs of people around the world.

Guided by Scripture (Acts 14:21–23; Revelation 5:9), the Missions Committee seeks to lead Oxlip Church in joining God’s work among every tribe, tongue, people, and nation. Our strategy focuses on praying, educating, training, sending, caring for, supporting, representing, and evaluating missionaries. This is carried out through sharing prayer requests, displaying missionary newsletters, practicing faithful stewardship of mission funds, and highlighting missions regularly through monthly *Mission Moments* during worship services. We also pursue new partnerships, encourage increased support, assist with short-term mission trips, and welcome missionaries during home visits and training opportunities as the Holy Spirit leads.

## Leadership & Team

Chairman: Jim Aleckson

Vice Chairman: Brian Bolstad

Secretary: Amie Johnson

Committee Members: Karen Putnam, Pam Darsie, and Melissa Sorenson

*“My experience at Windigo was nothing short of amazing. I had the pleasure of meeting wonderful people and sharing the gospel with not only the kids, but everyone involved. I will forever be grateful for the positive, lasting effect this has had not only on my character, but my faith life as well.”*

— **Carter Larson**

## Key Accomplishments in 2025

- Updated the Missions Policy and Strategy to better guide current and future efforts
- Hosted four Missionary Sundays, providing the congregation with meaningful ministry updates
- Met personally with two missionaries while they were home and in town
- Sent out three short-term mission teams from Oxlip Church
- Continued consistent monthly Mission Moments during worship services

## Challenges Faced:

- Maintaining consistent missionary support and communication
- Developing clearer and more effective evaluation processes for missionaries

## Lessons Learned:

- The importance of intentional, personal communication with missionaries
- The need for structured evaluation tools to better support and steward mission partnerships

*“The Missions’ Ministry is deeply grateful for the faithfulness of God and the generosity of His people.”*

Jim Aleckson, Missions Ministry Chair

## Vision for 2026

- Establish one-on-one communication between Oxlip members and each supported missionary
- Develop and implement a yearly missionary evaluation form for ongoing review and care

## Strategic Needs & Requests

- Recruit four additional volunteers to help build and maintain personal connections with missionaries.
- Work with the Elder Board on a 5 to 10-year vision for missions, both locally and internationally.

# MISSIONS





**Ministry Leader:** Dawn Selin

### **Department/Ministry Overview**

The Deaconess Ministry serves Oxlip and the community with compassion and care – being the hands and feet of Jesus in tangible ways.

### **Leadership and Team**

Deaconesses: Kim Aleckson, Daneille DeBruyn, Emily Peterson, Dawn Selin, Carol Werlein, Michelle Ziegler, and Autumn Wandersee

Grief Share: Tim and Michelle Ziegler, Facilitators

### **Accomplishments**

- 1 bridal shower Victoria Hein (Winston Waligora)
- 2 baby showers Olivia Scarfpin and baby Colter; Alyssa Warneke and baby Wilder
- A wedding reception Terry and Sheila Anderson
- Mother's Day Brunch
- Resumed Senior 55+ lunch (third Thursday of every month) with soup, fellowship, games, and puzzles.
- Chili cook – off/ Harvest party, which was a great family event and a huge success!
- Changed to Thanksgiving Dinner on Sunday, November 23  
This was another family event and very successful!
- Women Christmas breakfast
- Ended 2025 with a New Years Eve Eve party with a meal, games, and fellowship

### **Challenges**

Serving teams should be a little larger. Deaconesses (and others) did a wonderful job of bridging the gaps. Dawn Selin will continue talking with those who are new and looking for a place to serve. Many of those conversations have led to new connections and involvement in serving the church.

### **Vision**

- create opportunities for fellowship/community (Bible studies, events, fellowship)
- serve and encourage those in need through prayer, Meal Ministry, Grief Share ect

### **Strategic Needs & Requests**

- Volunteers for large events (Chili cook -off/Harvest part, Thanksgiving Dinner)
- Thrivent cards for bigger events

### **Possible New Initiatives**

- Prayer-walks throughout the church building and campus
- Small Groups/Table Fellowship  
Possible small groups of 8 individuals or 4 couples gather at a home once a month for a meal and fellowship.



**Ministry:** Jeff Anderson, Head Deacon

### **Ministry Overview**

The Deacons Ministry is concerned with maintaining the church property and buildings, including improvements, and matters of security and safety. They also encourage men's ministry opportunities.

**Leadership and Team:** Jeff Anderson, Derek Johnson, Roger Koppendryer, Bruce Herdina, and Josiah Scheumann

### **Key Accomplishments**

- Workday on May 17th, 2025.  
We had 26 people from our congregation that participated in various jobs, such as:
  - replacing all the lights in Heritage Hall, cutting firewood back by the ball field from the dead trees taken down from the yard by Mac tree service on March 3rd, cleaning in the church building, cleaning the lawn
  - this was a great time of fellowship that ended with burgers and brats
- We have talked about changing out the locks or rekeying them for years, so Sept 16 all the locks in the main building and youth building were rekeyed thanks to Bruce Herdina.
- October 25 Chili Cook-Off and Awana Harvest Party: Deacons helped with the pumpkin carving, campfire, and photo booth.
- Fall Workday was Nov. 1<sup>st</sup> – There was a small turnout of people, but we accomplished a lot, including: security cameras were installed, ball field shed, installed door jamb, secured the door with lock, and cleaned out the closet by the south entry.

### **Challenges**

The parking lot has been challenging this year because we don't have our plow guy come unless it's over 2 inches because of the cost. This year, the problem was that we got ice on top of the little snow, which becomes a safety hazard.

### **Vision**

- The South Entrance: Concrete slab needs to be removed and replaced. Maybe putting 2 or 3 handicap spots by that entrance. Possible door replacement as well.
- Internet service needs to be upgraded to better serve our office staff, classrooms, and Sunday morning worship services.





**Ministry Leader:** Janet Kalisch

**Department/Ministry:** White Cross

### **Department/Ministry Overview**

The Whitecross Ministry's mission is to serve others by making quilts for people in need.

### **Leadership and Team**

Gloria Cahoon, Cheri Dufault, Janet Kalisch, Jan Oakes, Joyce Scheumann, Jeanette Van Bockel, Leila Yaggy, and Michelle Ziegler

### **Key Accomplishments**

- 21 quilts and 1 baby quilt made
- 2 quilts donated to the Men's Wild Game Feed silent auction
- 12 quilts sent with Jim and Kim Aleckson's mission trip to Windigo Island. These were given to the children attending VBS.
- 3 quilts sold on a silent auction to raise funds to purchase tables
- 3 quilts sent to Ukraine

### **Challenges**

Where to send the quilts since our contact through Reach Global of EFCA is no longer available.

### **Vision**

- Make quilts for Stepping Stone Emergency Housing (a homeless shelter in Anoka).
- Make 40 baby quilts to send with Joyce Scheumann on a mission trip to Zimbabwe, June 2026.

### **Strategic Needs & Requests**

More volunteers to help sew quilts.

**Oxlip 2025 Budget – God’s Provision through the Faithfulness of His People**

<b>Oxlip Church 2025 Budget and Revenue Received</b> (February 2025-January 2026)	
<b>ACCOUNTS</b>	<b>APPROVED 2025 BUDGET</b>
<b>Income</b>	
General Fund	\$382,550
<b>Expenses</b>	
Payroll	\$193,160
Board of Elders	\$2,250
Adult Ministries	\$1,300
AWANA Ministry	\$5,000
Christian Education Supplies	\$3,500
Youth Ministries	\$10,250
Church Operations	\$30,450
Worship Ministry	\$8,100
Missions Ministry	\$40,070
Deacons Ministry	\$88,470
<b>Total Approved Budget</b>	<b>\$382,550</b>
Revenue Received (as of Jan. 24, 2026)	\$384,467
Actual Expenses (as of Jan. 24, 2026)	\$330,212
	<i>Note: Revenue received above budget and expenses was placed or invested in reserve accounts to cover anticipated facility, ministry, and payroll expenses in 2026.</i>