CULTIVATE.
ENOUGH.
COURAGE.

Living Water Association
Ohio NorthEast United Church of Christ

# 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

# FROM OUR TRANSITIONAL MINISTER

Dear Association Community,

What a special year 2025 has been in the Association!

For 2025, our staff has prepared the Annual Report in front of you. The purpose is to share the accomplishments of the Association and celebrate the ministries of our membership and UCC community: (a) Authorized Ministers, (b) Local Churches, and (c) affiliated agencies of the United Church of Christ. So many blessings have abounded, even in these turbulent times.

I especially give thanks for your financial contributions to the Association and wider UCC through the Our Church's Wider Mission funding program. With your exceptional generosity, Living Water is the #1 donor to the Heartland Conference, ensuring that outdoor ministries, global and disaster ministries, leadership and community-building continue in Living Water and all over the Heartland Conference. Generosity is a gift of the Holy Spirit, and I celebrate that the Holy Spirit works among us by granting us generous hearts.

Now that I've been with you as Transitional General Minister for ten months, this is the most important message I have to share: we are blessed with wonderful people! I am meeting people with big hearts who care about doing big things. Together, I am confident that the Living Water Association will have a 2026 filled with faithful action, a love for vitality, and a neighborliness that keeps us all grounded in Christ's love with one another.

How can the Living Water Association support you and your ministry in 2026?

Peace and blessings,
Elena Larssen














# BY THE *Numbers*

## SUPPORTING OUR PASTORS & INVESTING IN OUR CONGREGATIONS

**134** *Congregations*

**15** *Members in Discernment*

**348** *Authorized Ministers*



**3** *Ordinations*

**14** *New Settled Calls*

**6** *Installations*

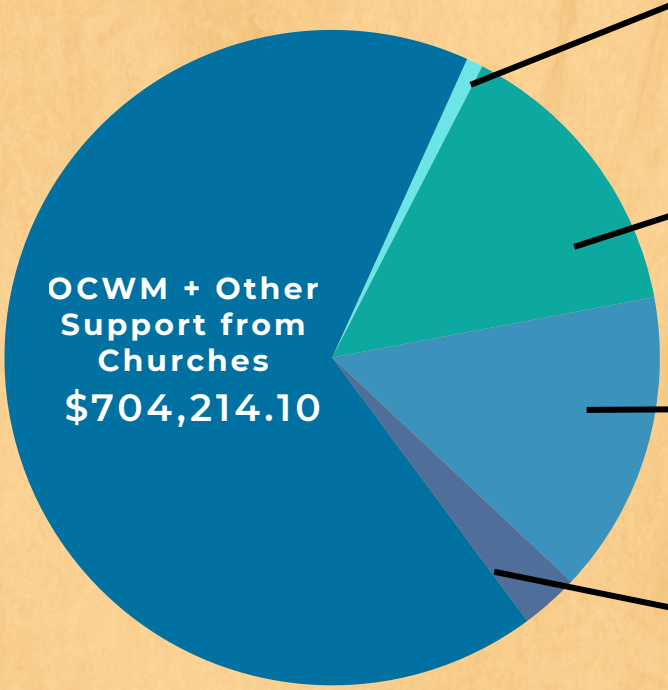
**5** *Transitional Calls*



**26** *Licensed Ministers*

Total Income:

**$1,052,460**



**Misc. Income**
**$8,614.05**

**Investment Income (General)**
**$152,306.37**

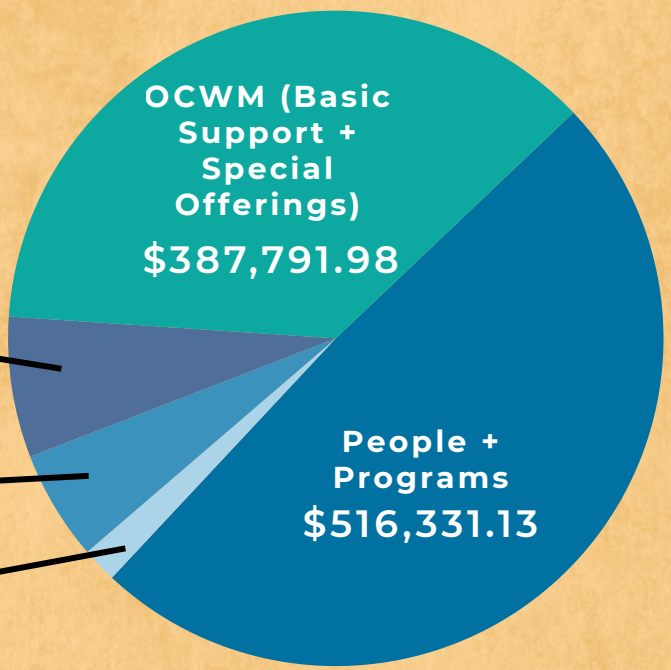
**Investment Income (Programs)**
**$157,182.27**

**Events**
**$30,143**

**OCWM + Other Support from Churches**
**$704,214.10**

Total Expenses:

**$1,052,460**



**OCWM (Basic Support + Special Offerings)**
**$387,791.98**

**People + Programs**
**$516,331.13**

**Administrative**
**$73,005.49**

**Events/Trainings**
**$57,062.37**

**Insurance + Audit**
**$18,268.76**

# CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, VITALITY & OUTREACH SUPPORT

Total Support Given to LWA Congregations:

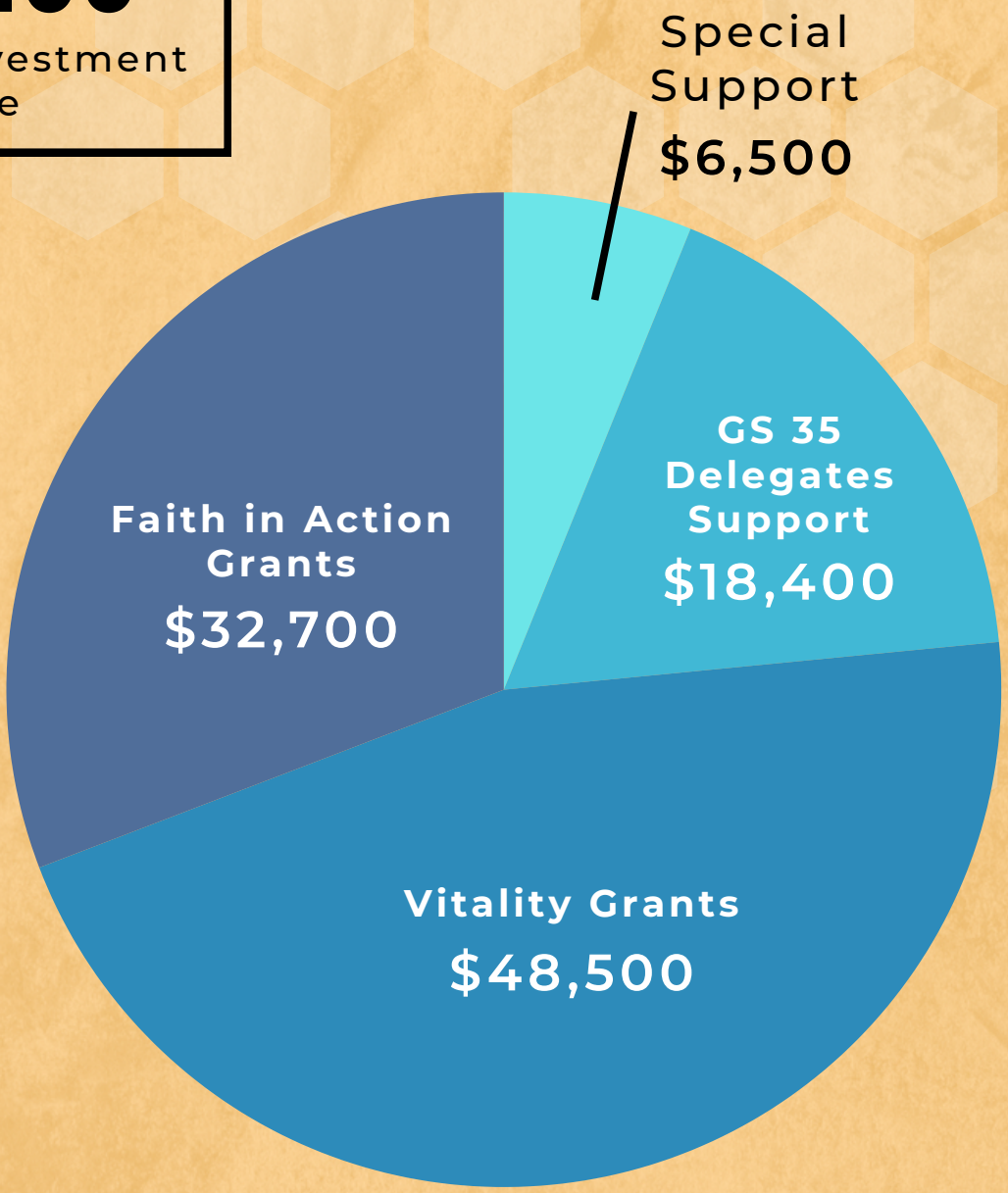
**$106,100**

Funded by investment income

**6**
*Congregations w/ Special Support*

**14**
*Faith in Action Grants*

**5**
*Development & Teechnology Grants*



# LIVING WATER ASSOCIATION • 2025 ANNUAL REPORT













# THE SPIRE CENTER
## SCHOOL OF POSSIBILITY
INSPIRATION, REIMAGINING & EXPLORATION

***2025 was an amazing year for learning!***



**13**
*SPIRE Center Offerings*

**224**
*Registrations*

mighty

THE DAMASCUS PROJECT

***And... New online learning coming in 2026 in partnership with The Damascus Project.***

# Faith in Action

Building Strong • Resilient • Beloved Communities




We help congregations grow strong, resilient, and beloved communities where they live, work, and worship. “Strong” means building on gifts—what’s strong, not what’s wrong. “Resilient” means developing the capacity to endure and adapt through collaborative neighborhood partnerships. “Beloved” is rooted in Dr. King’s vision of a community grounded in love, compassion, and justice—where people are seen, valued, and included.

## Some Highlights from 2025

**Orrville Youth Retreat:**
**Community Dreaming + Food Justice**

Partnered with the Community Life Collaborative (CLC) and hosted at the Federated Church of Chagrin Falls Family Life Center, creating a new formation space for the Orrville youth retreat. Led youth through an asset-based community dreaming process, resulting in practical ministry prototypes (hands-on church activities, storefront/garden concepts) designed to nourish neighbors and advocate for food justice with dignity.

**Creation Care & Local Communities**

- Advanced creation care and place-based witness through Pilgrimages of Hope for Creation, in partnership with the Catholic Commission of Summit County.
- Supported neighborhood restoration through the Environmental Justice Network of Akron Tree Giveaway: 200+ trees planted.
- Stood alongside neighbors at an Ohio EPA hearing regarding the proposed Alterra industrial site: 30+ in-person testimonies and 1,000+ written statements.

**Belonging + Advocacy for Daily Bread**

- Co-hosted a Pride Worship Service (June 1) and supported a unified UCC presence in the Cleveland Pride March—intergenerational, ecumenical public witness rooted in belonging.
- Living Water was present at the Third Annual Faith & Legislative Leaders Lunch (May 1) at the Statehouse, joining clergy, lay leaders, and legislators to address rising hunger and policy shifts impacting SNAP and food-bank funding.

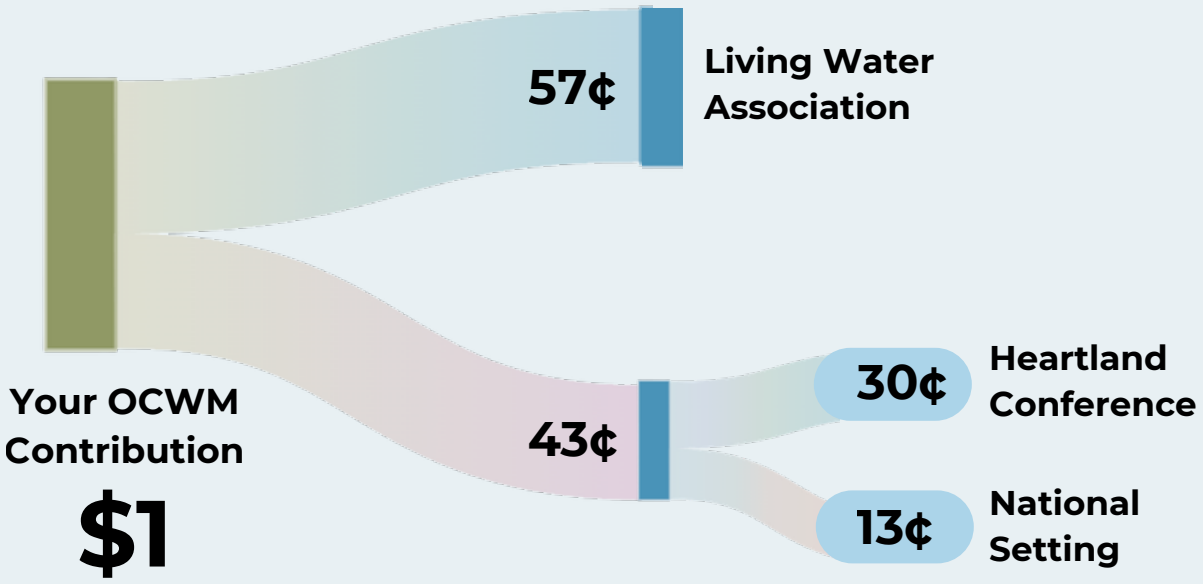
In 2025, our work centered on formation, creation care and environmental justice, and faith-rooted advocacy—convening partners, strengthening local capacity, and standing alongside communities in moments that mattered.

***(Follow the QR Code for more)***

***How can Faith in Action support your congregation’s witness in 2026?***

## For every $1 given by our Congregations to OCWM

- **57¢** funds ministry in the Living Water Association.
- **43¢** is forwarded to the Heartland Conference.
- **30¢** is retained by Heartland Conference.
- **13¢** is forwarded to the National Setting.




Amounts shown per $1 OCWM gift.

## Thank you for supporting the Living Water Association



***Dear Friends,***

***I want to express my deep thanks for your financial support that makes expressions of ministry in the Heartland Conference possible. Your deep commitment to giving through Our Church's Wider Mission offering sharing has enabled much good for the world.***

***With much thanks and appreciation,***
***Rev. Dr. Dave Long-Higgins, Conference Minister***

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SCAN ME

livingwaterone.org