

## Two Aspects of Central Illinois District (CID) Finances

1. CID does not receive as much money from its member congregations as it once did, down from \$2.3 million in 2000 (7.3% of the offerings they received then) to \$1.58 million in 2023 (which was 4.1% of offerings). In January, 2025 CID's Board of Directors received word that during 2024 these remissions went up somewhat, to \$1.64 million.
  - a. CID Missions, Evangelism, Stewardship, and Human Care Executive Ken Schurb reported to the 2018 District convention that "without a substantial increase in income, reconfiguration seems unavoidable. . . . Since missions comprise so much of District activity, missions will end up curtailed." Since then, this prediction has been coming true with respect to missions.
    - i. Since 2019, CID could no longer continue support for a mission congregation in Peru, Redeemer Lutheran Church. This church closed in 2023.
    - ii. CID no longer engages and pays prison chaplains. Instead, it provides \$5,000 a year to churches that allow their pastors to go to nearby prisons and conduct services and/or Bible study one day a week. It now does this for churches whose pastors visit a total of two prisons, not the former five or six.
    - iii. CID can no longer afford to provide substantial funds (over \$60,000 a year) toward salary and benefits for a campus ministry worker for Eastern Illinois. Immanuel Lutheran Church, Charleston has had no such worker since 2019.
    - iv. CID no longer provides salaries for Spanish-speaking vicars at St. John Lutheran Church, Beardstown. Twice a month Pastor Pablo Dominguez takes time from his work in E. Moline to help with Spanish outreach in Beardstown.
    - v. With Deaf Missionary Pastor Tom Phillips' departure for another call in late 2024, CID is in the process of reconfiguring District deaf ministry. It seems unlikely that another full-time missionary to the deaf can be called.
    - vi. When Ken Schurb begins modified service to CID on September 1, 2025, administration of CID missions will be handled by another worker (yet to be selected), who will do this work for two days a week instead of three.
  - b. More decline in congregational remissions will yield additional reduction of activity.
  - c. Missions is an example of services that CID provides on behalf of congregations. For more on District and Synod services *on behalf of congregations* and related services *in support of congregations*: "Working Together for Christ: Congregational Giving to Synod and District," a four-page special feature from *GatePost* 2024:1 (Feb., 2024). At a spring, 2024 conference, District pastors received copies of this article for their churches. It remains available at <https://www.cidlcms.org/ministry-stewardship.html> Scroll down this page to "Working Together for Christ."

2. CID owns several buildings that stand in need of significant repairs and upgrades. Most of these are mission facilities. The other is the District office in Springfield.
- a. As noted on the last page of “Working Together for Christ,” Mission Commission reported to the 2022 CID convention that major repairs and upgrades – over and above routine maintenance – at the mission sites *alone* were figured to cost a bit more than two-thirds of a million dollars during the next 10 years. An update of this estimate in 2024 saw the total soar to a little over a million dollars to be spent between 2025 and 2035 – again, not including any work on the District office.
  - b. CID’s District-owned mission sites are:
    - Cristo Rey (Christ the King) Lutheran Church, East Moline
    - Immanuel Lutheran Student Center, Macomb
    - University Lutheran Church, Champaign
    - Wittenberg Lutheran Center, Normal

At its January, 2025 meeting the CID Board of Directors determined to sell the Christ Lutheran Church for the Deaf building in Jacksonville, and contribute all proceeds from this sale to the endowment fund for CID’s District-wide deaf parish, Central Illinois Lutheran Deaf Outreach. Subtracting the costs of any projected future work on the deaf church building reduces the total repairs and upgrades estimate for the mission sites by some \$66,500. It now comes to about \$950,000.
  - c. Dollar for Missions giving (DFM), adopted by the 2022 CID convention, has already funded – and is currently funding – some of the repairs and upgrades needed at District mission sites. On paper, DFM has the potential to pay for them all. However, only one-fifth to one-sixth of CID congregations actually participate in DFM. During its first two years of operation, 2023 and 2024, DFM has yielded about \$35,000-\$40,000 per year. That amount is not sufficient to cover needed repairs and upgrades at the mission sites, to say nothing of priorities such as new church starts or mission-focused augmentations of existing ministries.
  - d. CID has engaged the Lutheran Church Extension Fund to explore the prospects for a District funding campaign. See the document “Bring Giving Home . . . but it doesn’t stay at home!”
  - e. *Delegates to CID’s July 13-15 convention should **discuss with their congregations** the reasons for and potential benefits of a major District funding campaign.*
    - i. All voting delegates will need to know what “the folks back home” think and say about not only the convention’s approving such a campaign but also their own congregation’s *generously supporting it*. CID would be most unwise to undertake a major funding campaign if its prospects seem precarious.
    - ii. Voting delegates will also need to know what “the folks back home” would prefer if the convention decides that it will *not* approve a funding campaign. Which building(s) should CID cease to own and operate, and in which order?

*Modified April 10, 2025*