



The Network of Camps and Retreat Centers
Affiliated with The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

2025 LOM BUDGET NARRATIVE

With this proposal of the 2025 LOM Budget, we first give thanks for each and every organizational member and individual member of LOM! The story of LOM has its heart and soul in the amazing ministries throughout this exciting network. LOM is all about all of our ministries sharing – your expertise, your experience, your financial support – so that outdoor ministry everywhere throughout the ELCA can be strong, resilient, robust, relevant, and vibrant. The impact of our work together through LOM is prolific. The sustainability of these ministries has been unquestionably demonstrated during these past few years. The sustainability and power of our ministries are manifested in the stories of faith which abound, at the same time that the challenges are profound. Never has it been more important for the community we know as LOM to be there for each other. The effectiveness of LOM is a reflection of the extraordinary leadership provided by the members of this network.

Lutheran Outdoor Ministries encourages, educates, equips and empowers bold and faithful outdoor ministry leaders for service in the Church and the world.

The overall aim in preparing this budget has been to acknowledge the magnitude of the current strategic plan for LOM. This budget is predicated on the confidence that our member organizations will provide financial support of LOM that grows in a way that's commensurate to the ambitious plans for LOM to continue to grow in our capacity to live into our mission together. Revenue projections, therefore, reflect cautious optimism while we keep expenses at a prudent level. We expect the priorities of LOM, as articulated in our strategic plan, to be as follows:

- Advocate for Outdoor Ministries
- Facilitate Connections Among Ministry Leaders
- Support LOM Member Organizations and Leadership
- Expand the Mission Capacity of the LOM Organization

This budget will require disciplined management and restraint with expenditures in order for LOM to have a balanced budget in 2025.

This narrative will provide further details and clarification regarding several budget line items. The accompanying budget proposal worksheet provides opportunities for comparison to income and expenses for 2023 and projections to the end of 2024.

INCOME

Curriculum Sales: \$ 27,000 Revenue Budget 2025

In order to compensate for a projected 1% deficit in 2024 of expenses over income, this budget includes a 1% increase in fees charged for the curriculum. The cost of the 2025 curriculum will therefore, increase as follows -

Curriculum full package (LOM Members): \$465 to \$470

Curriculum full package (non-LOM Members): \$540 to \$545

Development bundle: \$100

Youth Ministry bundle: \$200

Supplement bundle: \$230

VBS bundle: \$170 to \$175

Investment/Interest: \$6,900 Revenue Budget 2025

In 2023, \$947 was the result of interest at the rate of 0.648% earned on the life of a two-year CD in the amount of \$72,500.00 with MIF that reached maturity in September, 2023. With the same principal amount of \$72,500, a new, 2-year CD was purchased at 4.76%, and it will reach maturity in September, 2025. The interest earned by that time will be around \$6,900.

Contributions - Individuals: \$60,000 Revenue Budget for 2025

This is our forecast based on the projection for 2024 and anticipating a growing response to telling the story of how important LOM has been for the ministry of so many outdoor ministry organizations.

Contributions – Business: \$1,600 Revenue Budget 2025

This is primarily anticipating the proceeds from the endowment fund established by GSB and administered by the ELCA Foundation.

Contributions – Camp Organizations: \$80,000 Revenue Budget 2025

We are grateful for the organizations that are coming forward and making contributions to LOM, and by those who are gradually increasing their annual contribution. We feel a 10% growth from 2024 to 2025 in contributions from member organizations is reasonable in light of the expansion of capacity inherent in the current strategic plan and we ask our member organizations to consider a similar increase in their annual financial contribution to LOM.

Contributions – Grants: \$4,000 Revenue Budget 2025

We anticipate grants from earnings on the endowment held by the ELCA for outdoor ministries to underwrite these items:

\$2,500 – LOM Diversity Grant

\$1,500 – LOM Innovative Program Award

Contributions ELCA: \$15,000 Revenue Budget in 2025

The ELCA has maintained its commitment to provide operational support funds in the amount of \$10,000 per year from the ELCA operating budget, for which we are very grateful.

We have requested that the ELCA increase its annual financial support of LOM by increasing this support from their operating budget to \$15,000/year in 2025 and \$20,000/year in 2026. While they are considering this request, we have been assured that there is an amount in the income account of the ELCA Endowment for Outdoor Ministries that will be sufficient to cover this increase of \$5,000 in 2025. Thus, \$10,000 from ELCA operating funds and \$5,000 from the ELCA Endowment for Outdoor Ministries

Contributions – Congregations and other Organizations: \$22,000 Revenue Budget in 2025

Many of these contributions are generated by individuals who assign their Thrivent Choice Dollars to LOM. This increased significantly in 2024 because an individual has begun to direct Thrivent Charitable dollars in the amount of \$10,000/year. In addition, a significant amount of these contributions are from synods.

Fall Conference: \$0 Revenue Budget 2025

There will be no LOM Annual Conference in 2025 because of the OMC Great Gathering which is being planned for November, 2025.

BTE/LTE Income: \$20,100 Revenue Budget 2025

Projection for LTE in 2025: 4 participants, single occupancy, @ \$900 + \$3,600; 20 participants @ \$775 = \$15,500 plus ground transportation shuttles = \$1,000 for a total of \$20,100.

Executive Director Gathering: \$12,125 Revenue Budget 2025

Based on 10 double occupancy participants @ \$500 = \$5,000 and 12 single occupancy @ \$550 = \$6,600 plus 15 airport shuttle participants @ \$35 = \$525.

Interim Executive Director School: \$0 Revenue Budget 2025

This event, most recently held as an event of the Outdoor Ministries Connection (OMC) in September, 2022, is planned to take place once in every 3-5 years. Because it is now an OMC event, its budget is part of the OMC budget and not part of the LOM budget.

Special Events: Auction: \$26,500 in 2025

Try as we might in our attempt to have the Auction proceeds go less to operating expenses and more toward special projects such as the reserved funds for event scholarships, we aren't confident in our ability to generate enough income to do so in 2025. Anticipating expenses of \$2,500, the auction income for the operating budget will cover these expenses plus contribute \$22,500 of income to the operating budget.

Summer Staff Recruiting App: \$0 Revenue Budget 2024

This endeavor was replaced, in 2023, by the “Friends Not Yet Met” social media advertising campaign. The full cost of this initiative was covered by a grant from the ELCA in 2023, as was the case in 2024.

EXPENSES

Curriculum Development: \$26,975 in 2025

The details of the curriculum budget are found in Appendix A.

Contracted Staff Services: includes Curriculum development (above) and Contract Staff Services at the Conference (below) \$79,015 in 2025

This line includes the contracted compensation for the LOM Administrator, Events Coordinator, Communications Coordinator (including the News Editor, and Bookkeeper functions. The budget is based on a 3% cost of living increase in 2025 over the 2024 amount, with the exception of the administrator who has requested that it stay the same in 2025.

Contract Services Conference Staff Support at the OMC Great Gathering: \$3,000 in 2025

This is the amount that the Events Coordinator and News Editor are reimbursed for their expenses to participate in the OMC Great Gathering, including their conference registration at the single occupancy rate at the conference and airfare as necessary.

Director Travel: \$8,000 in 2025

We are assuming that the amount of executive director travel in 2025 will be similar to what it was in 2024. We will also have the reality that four major travel events in 2024 were covered by the Total Inclusion! grant.

Strategic Planning Process: \$0 in 2025

The work of the Strategic Planning Task Force has been completed. Implementation of the plan is now in full swing!

- MRA-1, Goal 1: Develop an ambitious and relevant marketing and communications plan for LOM to reach its external audiences. We have entered into a contract with TicTacToe Marketing to develop this plan. This will not impact the 2025 operating budget; the funds have been designated from the Reserve Fund, Board Discretionary Reserve, for this purpose.
- MRA-1, Goal 2: Develop an intentional marketing effort focused on young adults and staff recruitment: The first round of the “Friends Not Yet Met” social media campaign was completed in 2023 by Two Tone Creative with a contract in the amount of \$21,000. The second round, in 2024, was accomplished with a contract in the amount of \$12,000. There is no impact on the operating budget because both contracts have been underwritten with grants from the ELCA.
- Intertwined throughout the Strategic Plan are goals and objectives related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI). Some of these initiatives are being underwritten with funds from the

second Total Inclusion! grant and from the Total Inclusion! Capacity Building reserve fund that was established with proceeds from unexpended funds of the first Total Inclusion! grant.

Fall Conference Expense: \$0 in 2025

The OMC Great Gathering will replace the LOM Annual Conference in 2025.

BTE/LTE General Expense: \$19,370 in 2025

This is based on the room and meal rates at Lutheridge (NC), for participants and faculty, supplies, and airport shuttle fees. Considerable savings have been figured, once again this year, into the LTE Expenses by considering the annual in-person meeting of the LTE Committee as an Organizational Meeting Expense. An additional expense, estimated at \$2,500 will be covered by an equal amount from the Total Inclusion! Capacity Building Reserve Fund.

Compass Points: \$1,500 for 2025

\$350 for an LOM representative from the Education Committee to be at the Coordinating Council Meeting + \$500 airfare for the representative + \$10 for each of 65 Contributing Organizational Members of LOM \$650 = \$1,500 Total.

Executive Directors Gathering: \$12,125 in 2025

The projected cost of room and meals plus all program expenses exactly equals the projected income for this event.

Collaborative Meetings and Projects: \$2,800 in 2025

This line includes expenses for 2 LOM Representatives (executive director and Board president or designee) at the annual Council Meeting of the Outdoor Ministries Connection, \$300 each for room & board, \$500 each for airfare = \$1,600. In addition, \$1,200 for LOM participation with our colleagues in the Outdoor Ministries Connection (OMC) in the next scheduled survey of church camps.

The next OMC Great Gathering is scheduled for November, 2025. LOM has contributed a 25% share of a planning loan for this event in the amount of \$12,500. This loan will be returned in full at the conclusion of the OMC Great Gathering. The funds are being reported on the Balance Sheet as such and therefore they have no impact on the LOM operating budget.

Organizational Meeting Expenses: \$20,000 for 2025

LOM Board at Annual Conference: \$1,000 single room & meals at the OMC Great Gathering + 1 additional night for the Board Meeting for 12 members = \$12,000. Plus \$500 airfare for each of 10 Board members = \$5,000. Total for Board = \$17,000.

LTE Committee Think Tank: \$3,000 in 2025.

Membership Benefits: \$1,200 in 2025

This is the fee LOM pays as our share of the vendor discount program in which we participate with other church camp associations. <https://www.lomnetwork.org/partners/vendor-discounts/>

Promotional Expense: \$1,500 in 2025

\$1,250: airfare, room, board, and meals for LOM to be represented by one person to represent LOM as an exhibitor at the ELCA Youth Ministry Extravaganza. Exhibit space and registration covered under the “conference swap” agreement with the Youth Ministry Network.

\$250 for exhibit supplies.

Development Expense: \$2,000 in 2025

EMail to regular donors asking them to consider monthly automatic withdrawal donations.

March: EMail to all current and prospective donors, segmented.

November: Direct Mail to current and prospective donors, segmented: \$2,000

Licenses and Website Expenses: \$4,600 in 2025

\$1225 DonorSnap (Financial Development Software)

\$180 ZOOM annual subscription

\$925 MailChimp list in excess of 2,500 (12 months @ \$76.85/month)

\$900 QuickBooks Annual Fee

\$50 QuickBooks 1099 Processing Fee

\$1,320 QuickBooks payroll service fees (12@\$110)

\$450 PayPal

\$4,600

Special Events: Auction Expense: \$2,500 in 2025

\$2,100 OneCause Auction Software

(500) Access to OneCause granted to 1 LOM Member Organizations @ \$500 each

900 Snacks, beverages, function room rental

\$2,500

Insurance Expense: \$1,300 in 2025

Current general liability policy from Church Mutual.

Recognitions: \$6,000 in 2025

\$2,000 projected to honor milestones and achievement/participation.

In addition, we anticipate the below items, to be covered by anticipated grants from earnings on the endowment held by the ELCA for outdoor ministries (see the Income line for Contributions – Grants):

\$2,500 – LOM Diversity Grant

\$1,500 – LOM Innovative Program Award

Legal/Audit Expense: \$3,000 in 2025

\$2,700: Financial Review of the year 2024

300: Preparation of 990 Form for 2021

\$3,000